

RICH AND POOR.

I HEARE THAT SOME ASKE HOW I DARE SO PLAINE,
TAXE THE ABUSES THAT I NOW SEE RAIGNE;
I MUSE AS MUCH THEY DARE SAY ILL UNTO IT,
OR DARE TO ASKE ME HOW I DARE TO DOE IT.

GEORGE WITHER.

RICH AND POOR.

SPARE NO ARROWS.

JOHN KNOX.

**WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH
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RICH AND POOR.

CHAPTER I.

AMELIA BELL lived in a wynd, near the head of a well-known ancient street in Edinburgh, called the Cowgate. This street runs from east to west; the western extremity, which is called the head of the street, terminating at the Grassmarket, so well described in the "Heart of Mid-Lothian," as the scene of Porteous's mob. From this point, the Cowgate extends considerably to the east, where its lower extremity terminates near the Abbey-Hill.

The Cowgate is principally inhabited by the lower orders of the people; it lies in a kind of valley, and has cross lanes leading up from it, to the High Street and Canongate, on the north, and to various

other streets on the south. These cross lanes are called wynds or closes; probably, because they are in general winding and close. There the houses are so high, that their summits appear in many instances almost to touch each other. Diverging again from these closes or wynds, there are other courts and openings, and *pends*, where stairs, and garrets, and cellars, and holes of all descriptions abound. “The appearance of the old town,” says a modern writer, “has been compared, with some propriety, to a turtle; the castle being considered as the head, the High Street the ridge of the back, the numerous wynds and closes the ribs, and the palace of Holyrood House the tail.”

When curiosity or business leads an inhabitant of the comparative palaces of other parts of the city to the West Port, Cowgate, or Grassmarket, he finds himself in a lower, more degraded, but not less busy world. On the bridges he sees shops, which vie in elegance with those of the sister metropolis. In the other quarters which we have been describing, he will also find shops; but, with the exception of a few belonging to respectable tradesmen, they are chiefly occupied by those who deal in old clothes, old furniture, old prints, cups, glasses, stands with faded vegetables, spiritous liquors, broom-sticks, thread, fruit, books, shoes, and every kind of second-hand goods.

Here and there, for the accommodation of the in-

habitants, there are wells placed, from which they draw the water, and carry it to their houses in pitchers or *stoups*. These wells are generally situated in recesses off the street, where the women assemble, and gossip, and squabble, and fight, and swear. The men are seldom to be seen in these places, which appear to be the peculiar resort of the female inhabitants. Here are often to be seen, carts filled with herrings, or potatoes, surrounded by various purchasers, wrangling with the merchants about the prices; in some places, ducks and fowls picking their daily food, dogs innumerable, and groups of dirty children. The mind is filled with astonishment and endless conjecture as to what must become of this busy population. Sometimes an idiot seems the centre of attraction; a silly body not unfrequently mingles with the crowd. Decrepitude in old and young is here more frequently seen than in the higher walks of life.

Such are the streets of the Cowgate: and those who survey the interior of the habitations, will find them filled with every stage of human life, and almost every stage of human misery; every hovel, every garret, every cellar, seems crowded with inhabitants. But the young who particularly abound, with the gaiety natural to their years, seem happy, notwithstanding disease and poverty, nakedness and wretchedness. And this is the appearance of the lowest orders of

society in Edinburgh in this age of philanthropy and improvement.

In Little Wark's close, near the head of the Cowgate, did Amelia Bell enter into existence. She opened her eyes, not on the light of day ; for here, at three o'clock, in the month of January, no day could penetrate ; but there was a fire, and two half-naked boys beside it ; and Amelia herself lay in her mother's arms on the floor, upon some straw, and a mat, with some rags to cover her. A broken basin, with the cordial of diluted whisky and brown sugar, was placed beside her, together with several phials and boxes bearing the labels of the Royal Dispensary.

There was one old arm-chair, and one small form ; some coals in one corner of the floor, and a few potatoes in the other ; and the room was filled with men and women, associates of Mr Bell's, who came to congratulate her upon this addition to her family.

It was about the middle of January, and notwithstanding the cold, the bad air, and the total neglect of that care which is usually bestowed upon infants in the higher classes of society, Amelia looked stout and healthy, and gave every indication of being likely to maintain the footing she had got in this world, miserable as it was. What would some of the childless minions of fashion have given to have had an heir to their wealth and honours, like this neglected

child of Mrs Bell's ? What watching would they not have bestowed upon it, what care, what tending, what consultation in rearing it ? While Mrs Bell gave her child a tea-spoonful of whisky and water, said " God help thee, poor brat ;" and mother and child fell into a deep sleep, which we shall leave them to enjoy, while we inform the world what we know of Mrs Bell's previous history.

CHAPTER II.

MRS BELL had been a very successful beggar ever since her marriage, which had taken place ten years previous to this period ; but her fortunes had received a severe blow, from the formation of a society for the suppression of begging, instituted by some philanthropic gentlemen of the city of Edinburgh.

These gentlemen, notwithstanding the duties of their several callings, found time to exert themselves in the service of their fellow-creatures, with much laborious and patient application ; and, at the same time, with a degree of warmth and enthusiasm, which nothing but christian principle could have inspired. Such was the success of their efforts that many of the mendicants, and Mrs Bell in particular, found their trade suspended. Begging (compared with what it had been) was now carried on in a private smuggling way, under constant fears of police-officers ; and obliged to bear the more respectable semblance of vending small articles in a basket, such as thread, tapes, needles, tracts, and children's books.

This society put a stop to Mrs Bell's proceedings,

and ruined her fortune. "I'm now a beggar indeed," said she, (in a pitiable letter, she wrote to her husband, John Bell, private in the 97th regiment of foot, at that time quartered at Vilmanstrand in Portugal.) "Dearest lovin' John," continued she, "I am sorrow to enform you, that we are a' naket and destitute; sum wicket folk o' this tounce ha'e ta'en it unto there heeds, to order a' peeple, wha mak there lievlyhod by what gude Chreestiens gead them in the streets, to be ta'en up, pit into the Breadwell prison, or sent out o' the place a' the gither. Oh, John! whan we was marr'ed, I thought that in an honest wiy, I could ha'e menteept the famely, but now I'm sair pit tilt indeed; what mair cand the' doo to us, then l'y us up, if we was thives or rubbers? 'To be sure the' gie us broo o' what was indeed our ain afore, the scraps that we got at doors; but my very heart scunners to taste it; the bairns, to be sure, are no sac nise, and it helps to keep in the life o' them, tho' it gangs to my hert, to see a wean o' mine tuch it; and the wark that the' gie out at there pository, I declare I canna dra a thread to please them, and after tiling and tiling, I'll no mak four pennies the hale week. Oh, John! ther'll cum a judgeman upon the land, for there traitment o' the puir; thes are sair times, and ye'll fend us sairly chinged gin ye cum back; send me a not' o' yere pay, ye canna need muckle siller whare ye are; beg

frae the C'ornell, honest man, or ony body, for I'm real ill aff. Jock and Willy are wild laddies, the' cum offerin' to pit them till schuls ; I wish they wad let ther learnin' alane, and pit something in their stamicks raither. I thank God ye ha'e been preserved thro' a' thae bluidy wars, every bullet has its maun. Nae mair at present, frae yere affectionate lovin' wife

“ SARAH BELL.

“ *Little Wark's Close,* }
Bailie Dited's Land. ” }

John Bell was a very different character from his wife. He had married in haste, and repented at leisure ; but the misery, care, and anxiety, he had known since his marriage, had been the means of leading him to serious reflections upon his past life, and it was now his earnest wish to do every thing in his power to lead Sarah to repentance and amendment. But Sarah's habits were too deeply rooted to be removed by human means. Brought up without any good principles to direct her, instead of increasing diligence, and rigid economy, to support upon little an increasing family, she had recourse to liquor, first to heal her ailments, and then to drown her cares ; she ceased to work, learned to beg, learned to lie. John worked hard as a day-labourer, and tried all means to benefit his family : but the money

he procured for clothes and food was invariably wasted by Sarah on drink. He tried every means ; he kept the purse himself ; threatened and coaxed by turns. The pawn-brokers were too numerous and accessible. He clothed the children when he set out in the morning, and found them naked at his return at night. The furniture was likewise pawned by degrees. John, though much superior to Sarah, was by no means a perfect character ; he wearied in well-doing ; his fortitude could not stand the trial of returning tired at night, to every discomfort, starvation, and quarrelling ; and at length, one day, in a fit of despair, he enlisted, and left Sarah and his children to their fate. Sarah fell into a fit, partly of passion, and partly of grief, from which she recovered to sell her last remaining blanket for whiskey, and in its fumes forgot John's desertion.

Jack and Willy, the two elder children, were, as usual, left to their own cogitations. Their kind-hearted neighbours gave them a little food, when none could be had at home ; and thenceforward Sarah's sole employment was begging, her pleasure was drinking, and her religious code, amongst other articles, contained this, " that she had little to fear from the world to come, as she was sure she was sufficiently punished in this world for all her sins." The story she told on her begging peregrinations was so far true,—" that she could not work, having

(she might say) two fatherless children to look after at home ; that her husband had gaen away and left her, and that she did not know whether he was living or dead ; at any rate, she was nothing the better of him.”

But poor John had a warm affectionate heart, and when absent from Sarah and his children, forgot much of her wickedness, and reflected much upon his own. “ Had I not been so hasty,” said he, “ I might have reformed Sarah ; I might have assisted my family. Oh ! when God bears with me, should I have been so harsh to a fellow sinner ?” Golden dreams of promotion, fame, prize-money, floated in his brain. All that he could scrape together of his pay, he sent home, with kind admonitory letters, to Sarah. Many were his deprivations, and many were his sufferings. Yet also many were his consolations ; for, though there was much wickedness and infidelity amongst his comrades, there were also many whose hearts were filled with love to their Saviour, and good-will to their fellow-creatures. God has his hidden ones in every station, and in every situation. The means of grace were blessed to John ; he became a pious Christian : but it was not the will of God that the fruits of a changed character should be shewn forth in him. His hour was come ; and he fell in battle a short time before the birth of his little daughter, which we announced in the preceding

chapter. The now reformed state of the concerns of the common soldiers and sailors brought a letter safely and free to Sarah ; but as she made the most of every thing, she suppressed her curiosity, till she sent Willy to beg, upon pretence of paying for it. “ Gae awa, ye idle brat,” said she to the red-haired urchin, “ gae awa to Lady Maria Murphy, and ax for money to pay for it.” Willy set off.

Lady Maria Murphy was rich, gave much money to the poor, without much self-denial, yet did little good. Her housekeeper had orders to give to none but worthy beggars, but at the same time seemed precluded from coming to any knowledge of their character, except from her physiognomical perceptions ; for she was debarred from going or sending to their houses, from fear of bringing disease and infection back to the house of her ladyship. Yet to this kind of easy charity did this advocate for good works trust, in a great measure, if not altogether, as her plea to have Heaven opened, and herself admitted amongst those who had worked out their own salvation—she hoped not even in

“ Blest tears of soul-felt penitence,
In whose benign redeeming flow
Is felt the first, the only sense
Of guiltless joy, that guilt can know.”

Far less did she trust in Him who alone can deliver from sin ; for she was in her own eyes a virtuous cha-

racter—one whose original sin, if such sin there be, was expunged at the baptismal font, and who had ever since led a moral, religious, charitable, good life. Self-deceived woman ! she did not even act up to her own low standard ; for she was not in the habit of daily self-examination, but derived the estimate she had formed of her own character from natural self-love, seconded by the flatteries of her parasites, and partiality of her friends, by whom she was much beloved, and declared to be an excellent, religious, good-humoured, pleasant, agreeable, and, above all, a very charitable woman, without any parade. She had no enemies, but stood much in need of faithful friends ; and above all, of that faith which would have convincingly shewn her that the Bible asserts no vain fable when it says, that “ the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” Such was Lady Maria Murphy, whose “ house was known to all the vagrant train ;” and when Willy Bell arrived at it, half-a-crown was immediately put into his hand by the housekeeper, without any doubts of its destination ; and having made his accustomed acknowledgment, viz. the suitable bow and blessing taught him by his mother, he proceeded to another and another house, collecting various sums for the same purpose.

He returned with the spoil to his mother. She then took the letter and opened it—Nature and con-

science broke forth with unfeigned grief and unrestrained force ; “ John is gane, John is killed !” said she ; “ my darling John, him that was sae gude to me, I’ve killed him, I forced him awa !” and she reproached herself in all the bitterness of grief, till her tears and suffocating sighs assumed the form of an hysterical fit, which continued till she was quite exhausted, and fell into a profound sleep. But the righteousness and repentance of all unrenewed characters “ is like the morning cloud and early dew ;” for John’s widow, and John’s wife, continued the same person, the same unaltered profligate, idle, beggar. “ How hardly shall they who have been accustomed to do evil learn to do well !”—“ With man it is impossible, but not with God.” And let us hope that the sins of Sarah Bell have not yet excluded her from the care of the God of mercy, and that the hour of her amendment is written in the unalterable Book of Heaven, that even for her a place for repentance may be found—

“ And hymns of joy proclaim through Heaven
The triumph of a soul forgiven !”

CHAPTER III.

SOCIETY may be compared to a line or chain composed of links, bent into a circle, of which the two extremes meet, when those which are nearer in the line never come in contact. Sarah Bell, though not absolutely the lowest part of the link to which she belonged, yet, nevertheless, might be said to move in the lowest link of the Edinburgh society; and, according to my proposition, she often came in contact with a being belonging to the highest link of the line, and high in that link both as to station and intellect. This being was no other than Lady Amelia Truefeel, daughter of the Marquis and Marchioness of Vainall. She was twenty years of age, and very beautiful. She had an eye for pity, and a heart open as day for melting charity. Sensibility to suffering of every kind, both of man and beast, seemed incorporated with her nature, and filled her with an enthusiastic desire to give relief to misery, in whatever shape it appeared. In her walks through the streets of Edinburgh, notwithstanding the suppression of begging, she often met with objects, whose appear-

ance, as if by some secret spring, opened her purse, and suffused her eyes with tears. She was fond of reading, and likewise enthusiastic in her admiration of virtue ;—and what was virtue, (she read in her Bible,) “ but to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked ;”—“ To weep with those that weep ?” And “ What was virtue,” said Dr Sweetly, in his beautiful discourses, which she heard every Sabbath, “ but to visit the fatherless and widow ?” What was virtue, said every one, but good works ? and what are good works, said her own heart, but works of charity and benevolence ?

French authors, elegantly bound, lay on almost every table in the drawing-room of the Marchioness of Vainall. Lady Amelia often perused them, and still they teemed with panegyrics of benevolence. Some of the heroines in the fashionable novels were famed for practising self-denial, that their alms might be more abundant ; and the heroes and heroines of the most admired works of imagination were always more or less adorned with this quality, and seemed to look upon their purses as if they literally thought, “ Who steals my purse steals trash.” Lady Amelia, therefore, thought she had sufficient authority for considering this virtue as that grace which was most highly esteemed both by God and man ; and, doubtless, when engrafted on the right root, it is so.

This then is Christian virtue, thought Lady Ame-

lia, and in this virtue I will seek to excel. My very heart spurs me to it, and I shall exert my every nerve to be charitable. Oh ! how her heart warmed when she heard of the exertions of a Howard or a Mrs Fry ! These are the true heroes, these are the true heroines, thought she ; away with all codes of faith but those that teach benevolence ! This is a specimen of the current of thought that passed through the mind of Lady Amelia Truefecl. Often as she sat at her father's sumptuous board, often at the splendid ball, often as she joined in the vanities usual in high life, and while she sat dressed in gay attire, covered with jewels, visions of human misery, and schemes for its amelioration, passed through her mind. " Oh ! if I durst," said she to herself, " soon would I convert these baubles into money, and scatter it amongst the poor."

The Marquis and Marchioness of Vainall had three sons and three daughters ; but Lady Amelia was the only one whose mind was visited by these unusual reveries. Lady Jane and Lady Maria, her two elder sisters, had also their waking dreams. " Oh ! if I was rich," thought each of these ladies, " I would have these jewels, that lace ; nothing would be wanting to my magnificence, had I but wherewithal to display my taste."

The Marchioness gave each of her daughters a handsome sum for her personal expenses ; but Amelia

alone had ever anything to bestow, and she alone closed the year "owing no man anything." The plainness of her garb was often viewed by the family with scorn, and drew forth threats that money misapplied should no longer be intrusted to her care. Many conversations passed on the subject between the sisters, but each kept her own way of thinking. When Amelia exhorted them to charity, they pleaded poverty. In vain she quoted the widow's mite, and pleaded the duty of self-denial. "People of our rank must have ornaments, must have dresses," said they, "and though you chuse to want them we cannot." "Were I as rich as Lady Maria Murphy," said Lady Jane, "I would give as much money to the poor as she does."

"When I get a twenty thousand pound prize in the lottery," said Lady Maria, "I will buy a set of diamonds, which I have been long wanting, and I will also be very charitable."—"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much," thought Lady Amelia. Few hearts open when rich that were shut when poor.

The Marchioness was constantly engaged, and did not trouble herself much with investigating the various whims (as she considered them), of her daughters. "Some have lap-dogs and some have beggars," said this liberal-minded woman. "Amelia will never be married, for who will have such an ill-

dressed dowdy; but the Marquis will have the better portions to bestow upon Jane and Maria."

The Marquis thought it his duty to give frequent lectures against vagabonds and beggars, and debarred Amelia from relieving them. He was not by nature tyrannical, and conceived his duty to lie more in issuing proper laws in his family, than in seeing them enforced. Amelia's conscience was silenced on this and other points by the text of "Whosoever loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me;" and she would even have felt capable of suffering persecution for righteousness sake. Matters wore this form in the family of the Marquis of Vainall, when one morning the servant came up to Lady Amelia, while they were sitting at breakfast, and told her that a poor woman wished to speak with her. "A vagabond at my door!" said the Marquis; "tell her to go about her business, or I shall send her to the Police-Office." "Ah! papa," said Lady Amelia, "do allow me to hear what she has got to say to me; just this once allow me to speak to her!" "You are a little idle goose," said the Marquis, "what pleasure can you find in speaking to such creatures? However, you may talk to her for once by way of experiment, and come back and tell me what she says."

"Ah! papa, you are very good," said the delighted Lady Amelia; and leaving her coffee and

toast, she went down to the lower area, where stood a woman of the middle size, with large determined looking feet, that had been long accustomed to suit themselves to any shoes, whether belonging to male or female. Of course, there is as great a variety of forms and expressions of countenance in the poor as in the rich ; and indications by feature, whether of noble or ignoble mind, are as perceptible in the plebeian as in the man of high descent. I shall not pretend to define very exactly the qualities depicted on the countenance of the woman in question ;—but she had a pair of twinkling, uncertain, unsteady eyes, and she had a voice whose tones were whine, and which had less in it of entreaty than complaint. It was no other than Sarah Bell. She wore a brown cloak, a dirty cap with a black ribbon, and had a child in her arms as dirty as herself.

Lady Amelia having full powers to examine her, desired her to come into the housekeeper's room, that she might deliberately inquire into her tale.

“ What have you to say to me, poor woman ?” said Lady Amelia, commencing the conversation.

“ God bless your sweet face,” said Sarah, in a supplicating tone ; “ myself and children scarcely brak bread aw yesterday, and hearen o' your ladyship's goodness to the puir, I just cam out, though, I may say, I'm scarce out o' the bed. I was laid by only

eight days ago ; and I'm a puir widow woman, that can neither work nor want."

" Poor creature," said the compassionate Lady Amelia, and the tear started to her eye. " Sit down a moment, poor woman."

" Mrs Comfit, Mrs Comfit," said she, calling to the housekeeper, " bring a little tea and some bread for this poor woman ; she has scarcely had any food all yesterday."

" Or else no," said Mrs Comfit ; " if a' tales are true, that's nae lee."

Comfit was neither so ardent, so compassionate, nor so easily taken in, as her young mistress, but she brought the tea and bread ; and while Mrs Bell was taking it, she proceeded to ask what she deemed more home questions, and more likely to draw forth the truth, than those put by Lady Amelia. She therefore, with a face which expressed, " I'll believe as much as I please of what you tell me," began her queries.

" What is your name, honest woman ?"

" Sarah Mackie is my ain name ; but my husband's name was Bell, and mony folk gie me the name o' Bell."

" What was your husband ?"

" He was an honest industrious labourer for mony years, but wark grew scarce, and he was obliged to

list ; and, waes me, I only heard o' his death a fortnight before I took my bed." Here Sarah gave her babe a sly pinch, upon which the child began to cry. The artful mother tried to sooth it.—“ Ay, ye may weel greet, my poor fatherless bairn.” And the mother wept, or pretended to weep, in concert.

The compassionate Lady Amelia could not refrain from adding a few tears ; but the hard-hearted housekeeper proceeded, unmoved, unmelted, with her queries.

“ But is there no person,” said she, “ who knows you, and helps you, if you have been so long in Edinburgh ?”

“ Waes me ! naebody helps me—I never axed from onybody except yoursell ; and, I may say, naething but needcessity wad a made me do that.”

“ Well, but how am I to know any thing about your character ?” said Mrs Comfit.”

Mrs Bell put on a look of assurance, and putting her hand into a pouch which hung below her cloak, she produced a tin box, containing the certificate of her marriage, John's last letter, and the letter announcing his death.

“ Yes,” said the persevering housekeeper, “ but what has this to do with your character ?”

“ My character,” said Mrs Bell ; “ my character ! “ I'se warrant I'll get a character. There's widow Brewsma, a decent purpose-like woman, whose been

but and ben wi' me these ten years. Dis not a' my neebors ken me weel? and nane that speaks truth 'll speak ill o' me." Here she wiped her eyes, and again tried to lull the babe.—“ Whisht, my poor wean! Ye're cauld and ye're hungry, I'se warrant, but I canna help ye, God knows.”

Lady Amelia ran up stairs with the certificate and John's letter, and laid the whole story before the company at breakfast. She herself gave it all the credit Mrs Bell could have wished.

The Marquis deigned to look at the marriage-lines and the letter announcing John's death. The Marchioness also deigned to cast her eyes upon them, and the young ladies followed their example.

These documents being genuine, bore the marks of truth, and carried conviction along with them, at least so far as corroborating the story. This prudent family, who were ever afraid of imposture, found in this instance all the marks of an object worthy of charity. To inquire into the morals of the person to be relieved never once occurred to them.

“ Well,” said the Marquis to Lady Amelia, “ for once you are not imposed upon; and, to prove to you that to forbid real charity is not my desire, I shall contribute my mite for the benefit of Sarah Bell,” and he opened his card, or charity purse, and laid down five shillings; the Marchioness and her daughters each added two and sixpence, and Lady Amelia,

elated with her success, delivered the fifteen shillings to Mrs Bell, who wept tears of joy, and loaded her with blessings.

“ May you never want,” said she ; “ may the Almighty make your bed in heaven, for what you have done for me ! Ye’ve saved a needful family from want.”

And so she had ; for the aforesaid sum supplied Mrs Bell with whisky, and her children with potatoes, for a whole week.

Sarah muffled her cloak over her infant, pocketed her spoil, drew her hood over her head, ascended the area-stair, and shuffled onwards on her way, looking as poor as before.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Mon livre sur la morale, fut au moment d’exciter une sedition.”

LADY AMELIA, happy in the success of this her first application to her father, retired to her chamber to brood over new schemes of benevolence, while the party in the breakfast-room continued to prolong their meal, and to utter their animadversions upon things in general.

“ Amelia is a strange girl,” said the Marquis ; “ I think it was the visit of Mary Sterne which first put these notions into her head.”

“ Oh no !” said the Marchioness ; “ poor Mary has too few notions in her own head, to be capable of putting any into her neighbours’ brains. How these notions came, ’tis difficult to say. Amelia used to have tolerable talents ; yet most Methodists are fools, and talk as if the way to get to heaven was to be miserable upon earth. Yet Amelia is not very far gone ; ’tis only a passing whim, which will probably go off in a month or two ; and if not, what does it signify ?”

“ I beg your pardon, my dear,” said the Marquis,

“ it signifies a great deal—a disease of that kind coming into a family, may infect the other members.”

“ I assure you, papa, we are in no danger, as long as we are so poor, of being too charitable,” said Ladies Maria and Jane.

The Marchioness, in common with many of her sex, loved to differ from her better half, which practice will be found in most cases a sure recipe to prevent conversation from degenerating into insipidity ; and yielding to this propensity, she gave her voice on this occasion against the Marquis, and in favour of Lady Amelia.

“ You view the matter much too seriously, my dear,” said she. “ I absolutely know some very rational genteel people, who hold the same opinions. Good Mrs Selfdo used always to say, that charity covereth a multitude of sins, and that it is much thought of in the Bible.”

“ The Bible is a very good book, I dare say,” said my lord, “ though few people can understand it ; and therefore, women who may pervert it, ought never to be permitted to read it to themselves.”

“ Oh, papa, you now go too far,” said Lady Jane ; “ I’m sure it has done Maria and me no harm : were I as rich as you I would be very charitable.”

Lady Maria said that she had given so much away this year, she soon would require a subscription for herself.

“ We shall say no more about it,” said the Marchioness, “ I hope my worthy friend Dr Purdie will call some day soon, and I shall make a point of having Amelia present, and I have no doubt he will explain the duty of moderation in all things to her ; and certainly religion comes with much force from him, a clergyman, and one who performs all his duties in such an exemplary manner. I have heard some traits of him lately, that quite fill me with admiration. Do you know, he sits an hour every day with Lord John Puff, ever since he had his paralytic stroke, and reads all the new publications to him, and tells him all the news ; and he gave twenty guineas to my certain knowledge out of his own pocket, to that poor family the Handtomouths, we were all so plagued about. I think that even Amelia must allow that he is charitable, and will not be so presumptuous as to differ from one of the church as to the manner of giving alms.”

“ To do you justice, my dear,” said the Marquis, meaning to continue the debate, “ your alms are generally given very privately.—But what do you want, Tom ?” said he to a smart footman, who at this moment opened the door, and stepping up to the Marchioness, laid a card before her.

“ The servant waits an answer, my lady,” said Tom.

The card was from Signora Dolcetto, who solicited

the Marchioness's patronage for her concert, and intimated that she had been advised by her friends to make the price of her tickets half-a-guinea.

"We cannot take less than a dozen of tickets," said the ladies; and Lady Jane immediately proceeded to answer the card.

"I fear poor Dolcetto has not met with much encouragement here," said the Marchioness; "and she told me positively she engaged at only £1500 after her expenses were paid. 'Tis real charity to go to her benefit. Send up to Amelia, and see what she has got to give us."

Amelia sent her maid to say, that her money being exhausted, she could give nothing to Signora Dolcetto.

"The girl has no real charity after all," said the Marchioness; "I always told you so."

"Why," said the Marquis, "I am not absolutely sure that Dolcetto is an object of charity after all. However, she is an object of necessity, for people in our rank of life; for I do not see how, after all your fine speeches, my dear, you can possibly get off. There is my name and guinea for you."

"That's a love," said the Marchioness; and having dispatched Dolcetto's courier,—in all the dignity of conscious virtue—in all the appetite of vigorous health—they renewed their attack on the rolls and chocolate. There was silence, save the sound of

mouthful after mouthful, sip after sip, and swallow after swallow. To a curious ear, what expression there is in silence—what meaning in the noises which are no noises ! How disagreeable, to some people, are the sounds even in silence made by those of unkindred minds—the manner of breathing—the slight hem—motion of hands upon table or chair—the moving of feet—the jerk—the swallow. The sound of those we dislike, is perhaps as disagreeable as their sight. It is these little delicacies, only perceptible to the refined and acute observer, which constitute the essence of that universally felt *je ne sçai quoi*, for which our language admits no equivalent, and which has never even been well translated.

Perhaps the well known, “ I do not like thee, Doctor Fell ; the reason why, I cannot tell,” comes as near as anything in our language to the expressive original. In the family of the Marquis of Vainall, all minds beat in unison as well as sounds ; all, save Lady Amelia, who sometimes gave an untimely sigh ; and Tom sometimes opened the door, regardless of the feelings of the family, when their appetites made no pause. At one of those moments, Tom again interrupted the meal.

“ Mr Staytraps and Mr Dealstar desired me to give these to your ladyship,” said Tom, laying two bills upon the table ; “ and they both wait an answer.”

“Impertinent fellows!” said the Marchioness—
“tell them to go to Mr Leesome, our agent. I never knew such impertinence, to come themselves, expecting to be paid, no doubt—asking what is really impossible for me to do.”

The Marquis looked at the bills. He was an honest man ; and shocked with the length of time they had been due. “My dear,” said he to the Marchioness, “I really think these ought to have been paid before this.”

“You are very ignorant indeed in these matters,” said his lady. “No person ever thinks of paying a jeweller’s bill any sooner. However, he shall be paid, notwithstanding his impertinence. What a mighty fuss about a hundred pounds !”

Her ladyship was offended, though she did not chuse to say so ; but she shut the door in a manner that revealed her secret ; it told that she was nettled, and that her conscience dared to reprove her, though she had often silenced it ; it told all that a door could tell when shut with a certain jerk, that all minute observers are well acquainted with. It is astonishing what even a door can tell of the state of a person’s mind ; it may be considered as a very good thermometer to indicate the state of the temper.

The Marchioness, though by no means a bad tempered woman, was extremely variable. When all things went as she wished, then her heart was glad,

and her countenance was lighted up with smiles ; but when any of her plans were crossed, or even when under slight indisposition of body, “ the tenor of her soul was lost ;” and frowns, and passing winds, and slight hurricanes, moved upon her looks, words, and actions.

How important are Christian principles in the regulation of that part of what may be called the constitution of the mind,—temper. How much evil, how much uneasiness, is occasioned by the want of temper ; or, to speak more correctly, the want of that love “ which beareth all things, endureth all things.” There are many varieties of bad temper ; some more or less hurtful to our neighbour, some more or less annoying to ourselves ; but all spring from the same root. There are also various species of good temper, which are more or less fruitful in good, and in spreading happiness around.

In the Marquis of Vainall’s family, there were many excellent shades for the connoisseur in this branch of the constitution of the mind. Indolence was the characteristic trait of the Marquis’s mind—a desire of rest and ease ; he meddled with no one ; not from a love of “ following after peace,” but from the fear of being troubled. He sometimes gave alms, because people importuned him ; while a beggar might have lain at his gate for ever, covered with sores, unrelieved, unassisted, provided he remained

silent. He classed all active well-doers, as well as all active evil-doers, together, as troublers of the peace. He was now near sixty years of age, and had obtained for himself, amongst worldly people, the character of a quiet, inoffensive, peaceable man ; or, in the gospel designation, “ an unprofitable servant, a cumberer of the ground.”

Christianity turns all natural bents towards one great object. The love of ease, which in the natural mind of the Marquis of Vainall, led him to a continual indulgence of personal quiet, both of body and mind, would, in a converted state, have led him to moderation of his desires—to the following of peace with all men—and to a continual quiet endeavour to direct them to the Great Cause, by exhibition of the “ meekness and gentleness of Christ.”

Contrasts not unfrequently meet in the matrimonial union ; and this was exemplified in the Marquis's case, for the Marchioness had an active mind. Scheme after scheme floated through her brain ; and, as she believed that human intellect directed all things, hers was never at rest. She was not, like the Marquis, idly inoffensive ; she was an active worker to obtain for herself and family the good things of this world, and to avoid and put away what she considered as its evil things. But her mind was by no means capacious, and knew not how to occupy itself, even in the worldly things that would have been most conducive

to the low ends she had in view. Continual disappointment followed her plans, and ruffled her spirit. But, had her mind, such as it was, and her natural bent, been directed to the Christian's first object, the glory of God, how powerfully would her natural qualities have conduced to render her a zealous promoter of good, an active and diligent servant in every good work, and one whose five talents had gained other five.

Lady Jane partook more of her father's temper than of her mother's, with the addition of a sanguine cheerful disposition, which seemed her own peculiar characteristic, and led her to a careless happy enjoyment of the present, and almost to think that all would at last be well, alike to the wicked and the good.

"I will enjoy life while I may," said she; "when I get old (of which she had no doubt,) then I will get gloomy and religious, and go to heaven when I die." Had her heart been converted, she would probably have had strong faith in the promises of the gospel, with joy in the Lord; and have committed, with unfeigned confidence, all her concerns into the hands of Him who judgeth righteously. She would have been "careful for nothing," and have taken "no thought for the morrow."

Lady Maria also partook of the natural temper of her parents. Her own peculiar traits were thought-

fulness, and firmness approaching to obstinacy. She was a firm supporter of a certain class of moral duties, but a strong opposer of others. Neatness, order, regularity, decorum, were, with her, converted into love of dress, a selfish consideration of her own convenience, and a straining at gnats. Christianity would have made her “decent in all things, a redeemer of the time.”

Lady Amelia by nature resembled her father, but, in addition, was modest, timid, and sweet, and earnest to know what was good. Soon was she taught by the Scriptures, that self-denial was essential in a follower of Jesus; and she laboured in her own strength to turn her propensities to good. She had not yet learned to seek the strength that is made perfect in weakness.

“Then dumb let other legislators be,
And only Jesus legislate for me.”

CHAPTER V.

BUT to return to the young mendicant, whom we left wrapped up in her mother's arms. She was just awakening from a refreshing slumber, as they descended the stair which led to Mr Donought's kitchen-door.

Mr Donought was a professor of Christianity, and as such professed to relieve the virtuous poor. He happened to be going into his own house at this moment ; but, casting his eyes over the stair, he descried Mrs Bell in her descent.—“ Pray, where are you going ?” said he, as he saw her preparing to invade his premises.

“ Deed, sir,” was the reply, “ hearin’ ye was a charitable gentleman, I was just going to see if you would help a needful woman.”

“ I can relieve no person I do not know,” said Mr Donought ; “ apply to the parish.”

“ Oh ! sir,” said Mrs Bell, “ if ye wad tak the trouble to inquire into my character.”

“ I have no time to inquire into your character,” said he ; “ go about your business ;” and he went

into his study, to read in the *Missionary Magazine* the last accounts from Otaheite.

Mrs Bell departed, and went down another stair. She did not know where she was going, or she would have thought twice, to use her own phrase. It was the house of Sir George Selflove, who was reading at his parlour window a new pamphlet, entitled, “*Practical Ways and Means for Ameliorating the Condition of the Poor.*” In a moment of pause and reflection, his eye caught the figure of the unfortunate Sarah ; he instantly rang the bell.—“ John,” said he to a footman, the prototype of his master in form and expression of countenance—“ John, tell that vagabond I saw go down stairs just now—tell her to go off this moment, or I shall send her to Bridewell.”

“ Yes, sir,” said John, who immediately went down stairs, delivered the message in person, and concluded by shutting the door violently in the woman’s face. The noise awaked the infant, who began to cry in a manner so unmelodious, that Sir George was again disturbed. He opened the window, and vented his wrath in blasphemous execrations—a language which they only love who are journeying to the place where it is continually spoken.

“ He’ll roast in hell for this,” thought Mrs Bell, with more pleasure than pain.

She proceeded on her journey, and went next to Lady Maria Murphy’s, whose character I have al-

ready described, and who was a great favourite amongst a certain class of beggars, for her money was liberally bestowed, and, as Sarah Bell observed, “ she was nae ower fasheous about caracter.”

Lady Maria sent her two and sixpence by her maid, and also ordered her some broth.

Sarah having made on the whole a tolerable day's work, bethought her now of returning home to enjoy the fruit of her labours ; but it was one of her maxims, seldom to let a begging day pass without acquiring a new friend, to add to her list when old ones failed. Poor Sarah was well accustomed to meet with rebuffs from many, who, having known her long, had known no good. She had often heard of Mrs Miller, a very charitable lady, who went about doing good ; but Sarah had certain forebodings of disagreeable investigating propensities exercised by Mrs Miller, which had hitherto deterred her from applying in that quarter. But there are moments in the lives of all, when they seem impelled to act quite contrary to their own ideas of prudence ; and in one of these moments Sarah determined to call for Mrs Miller, and judge for herself.

Mrs Miller was a widow, whose income was very limited ; but she made this no pretence for turning away the poor that cried from her door. She had two sons and one daughter, who engrossed her warmest affections in no common degree ; yet without engross-

ing them to the exclusion of every other tie, human and divine. She was an evangelical Christian, and accordingly stigmatized as a Methodist.

Sarah Bell here found admission into the kitchen, while the cook went to inform her mistress, "that a poor, decent, wise-like body was below."

Mrs Miller was well experienced in the ways of beggars; she had first been an *amateur*, and was now a *connoisseur*, of this unhappy class. Out of her widow's mite, she had contrived to feed many hungry, and clothe many naked. She had found in her own experience, that "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth." She addressed Mrs Bell in her usual gentle voice. Craniologists and physiognomists have their followers; but the voicologists have never thought of arranging their observations into a scientific form. The tongue is, nevertheless, as certain an index to the mind, as any other part of the human frame. Mrs Miller had a soft, soothing, pitying, mellowed, firm voice, which belonged to no wavering, harsh, or unfeeling character.—"Good woman," said she to Sarah Bell, "pray what have you got to say to me?"

"O! mem," said Sarah, "hearin' ye was a charitable lady, I just can' to see if ye would tak' compassion upon a widow woman, that can neither work nor want."

Here she repeated the story with which my readers are already well acquainted.

“ Poor woman,” said Mrs Miller, “ if what you say be really true, you are much to be pitied indeed ;” and she took a pencil and a bit of paper out of her pocket.—“ What is your name ? and where do you live ?”

“ Sarah Bell,” was the reply,—“ Little Wark’s Close, near—”

“ Oh, I know the place very well,” said Mrs Miller, interrupting her ; “ I have often been there. Have you anything from the town, or from any society ?”—“ Nothing, mem.”—“ Have you never applied ?”—“ Never, mem.”—“ How have you contrived to support yourself ?”—“ Poorly enough ; just what ony gude Christian like yoursel pleases to gie me.”—“ I hope you are a good Christian yourself,” said Mrs Miller.—“ I had much need,” was the reply.—“ What church do you sit in ?” This was rather a puzzling question to Mrs Bell, as she made Sunday literally a day of rest. However, having her wits about her, she luckily recollected the name of the nearest church to her, and answered, “ Waes me for my soul ! I’ve ill gettin’ out ; it’s no ilka Sabbath I can get out wi’ these weary bairns ; but whenever I can, I gang to Mr Dumps’s kirk.”

“ I fear you will not get much instruction there.”

“ I fear no,” said Sarah Bell, who made a rule never to contradict her betters, when she was in her profession of beggar.

“ You had better hear Mr Mansfield, my poor woman,” said Mrs Miller.

“ Waes me,” said Sarah, “ where am I to get a seat in Mr Mansfield’s ? the very passages are crowded to the mouth ; and rich nor poor can get a seat for love or money.”—“ But if you go early,” rejoined Mrs Miller, “ there are benches in the passages, where those who have no seats are entitled to sit.”

“ Aweel, mem,” said Sarah, “ I’sc try next Sabbath ; though troth (casting her eyes upon her shoes) my claise are in such a state, I’m ashamed to be seen.”

“ God looketh upon the heart,” said Mrs Miller, “ and he is more likely to provide you clothes if you despise the shame of tattered garments in eagerness to hear his word. Ah ! if the poor, and also the rich, were as eager in hungering and thirsting after righteousness as after the meat which perisheth, they would not so often go empty away.”

“ That’s true,” said Mrs Bell,—a phrase which she found convenient, as a reply to all assertions which she did not thoroughly understand, and did not find it convenient to contradict.

“ Have you a Bible ?” continued Mrs Miller.—“ Oh ay, mem—what could I do without the Bible ?” This was a lie ; her Bible had been long since sold,

and was always the article she first discovered she could do best without.

“ I trust you read it daily,” said Mrs Miller, “ and that God has opened its precious truths to your mind.”

“ Mamma, mamma,” said a voice, which Mrs Miller immediately recognized to be her son’s. It was the hour she generally devoted to instructing him ; and as her domestic duties never were neglected in the midst of her charitable occupations, she gave Sarah Bell sixpence ; and, promising to inquire farther about her, she dismissed her for the present.

“ I’se warrant she’ll ne’er think mair o’ ” thought Mrs Bell to herself ; “ wae’s me ! i’ts a limpit like sum to gie a body ; I think, considering the gude advice was sae plenty, the money might hae been mair. Commend me to Lady Maria Murphy, who aye sends me half-a-crown, and nae advice ava. I see Mrs Miller’s way is a bushel of advice and sixpence.” But Sarah was now tired, both of reflecting and walking, and proceeded on her way homewards. She extracted a few shillings from people, too indolent to inquire into the state of the poor, yet too compassionate to turn away from misery without giving relief.

The relief they think they are giving to the poor is actual selfishness, and an effort to relieve themselves. It is an amiable weakness we must own ; but oh ! how unlike the charity of Christians ! Where is

the self-denial ? where is the love, without which charity “ is sounding brass, or tinkling cymbals ?” Yet, doubtless, there are many occasions where Christians are precluded from inquiring minutely into the state of the poor. Then let not the hand of charity withhold the mite—“ the tribute which the happy to the unhappy owe ;” but let them hope, that what is given from love to Christ, may be Heaven-directed.

Sarah Bell reached home in safety ; she gave sixpence to each of her sons, who went and provided themselves as they could. She sent one of them to buy her a bottle of whisky. Her neighbours, Lucky Bleareyes, and John Macsnuff, joined her carouse ; they drank till they were, as usual, more than half intoxicated.

Mrs Bell, sunk in sleep, forgot her cares, her poverty, and her sins. She found her little babe preserved by Providence, and sleeping safely beside her in the morning. The sinful mother arose, and reflecting upon her yesterday’s occupation, having a bit of paper, and pen and ink, she wrote as follows to Lady Amelia Truefeel.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LADYSHIP,
LADY AMILIA TRUEFEEL,

I take the liberty of writen to your onerable ladyship, to say, that I clean forgot to aske your ladyship’s leave to ca’ my poor bairn after your ladyship.

She is to get her name, God willing, on Sabbath next. I'm the bearer ov this mysell, and wait your ladyship's pleasure.

Your humble Servant,

SARAH BELL.

This letter excited great laughter in the family of My Lord; but Lady Amelia being differently moved, went down in person, assured Sarah Bell of her consent, and promised to send her maid with a cap for the occasion. The cap was made and sent; and accordingly, at the Reverend Dr Dumps's kirk, the child, held up by Peter Mackie, an oe of Saral's, was christened by the name of Amelia, after her benefactress, Lady Amelia Truefeel.

Mrs Bell, who made the most of every thing, wrote similar letters to all her friends, offering the name; but Amelia was the actual name of our heroine. She also made a good deal about this period, by writing letters, soliciting assistance for paying her rent. Little Amelia throve as well and better than could have been expected in this dwelling of darkness, the abode of a benighted soul, whose deeds were evil.

CHAPTER VI.

I SHALL not pretend to enter into the difficult question of how and when a soul may be converted from darkness to light. We have high authority for recommending unto all repentance towards God, springing from a deep sense of their own unworthiness ; and high encouragement to use our most strenuous efforts for the performance of the duties of morality, according to the lofty standard of Christianity, not according to the specious self-righteous views of philosophers, or the fictions and flimsy webs of romance.

There are many who appear full of amiable qualities, whose humility is but concealed pride, and whose light is but darkness. They seek to know the truth ; but false is their pilot, deceitful is their light, and they are tossed for ever amidst the shoals of error, and sink at last in the quicksands of sin.—And, alas ! there are a still greater number, who, trusting in themselves that they are righteous, reject the truth, and hope not in the righteousness of their Redeemer. How just was the observation of a pious Christian, who, when he heard it affirmed in church, “ that man

had no right to expect any interest in Christ, if he *had not fulfilled his part, and done all that lay in his power,*" thought if that were true, none but little children could be saved ; for he did not believe that any who had lived to maturity had done all the good they could, and avoided all the evil that they might.

Yet not of this description was Lady Amelia Truefeel. She daily searched the Scriptures ; and the time was fast approaching, when her mind was to receive the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Yet repentance towards God, and sorrow for sin, were difficult to a young mind, whose natural depravity had never been called forth ; who had not been tempted nor tried ; and who as yet knew not what was in her own evil heart. Her character was very different from that of her mother and sisters.—She endeavoured to follow out the morality of the Bible ; they followed the morality received in the world. But the humbling characteristic doctrines, which distinguish Christianity from all other religions, were alike unknown to Lady Amelia, as to her mother and sisters.

She agreed with them in thinking there was much in the Bible not intended for our understanding ; but charity, she was persuaded, was there commanded, in terms not to be misunderstood. She followed charity, as pleasing to God, and as a plain command of her Saviour ; she believed in part, and acted conscientiously according to her belief.

She would have given “ all her goods to feed the poor ;” she would have given “ her body to be burned ;” but she had not learned to feel that her prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled, were but the feeble efforts of a child.

“ I cast them at thy feet ; my only plea
Is what it was, dependence upon thee.”

Her mother and sisters would have made no sacrifice whatever ; they believed that the just would go to Heaven, and in their own eyes they were just. They either paid or meant to pay their debts ; they were charitable, for when they had any money to spare, they gave it to the poor. They asserted that they kept all the commandments, and on this ground were entitled to Heaven. Alas ! in many of them they failed, even in the letter ; and the spirit of all of them was to them unknown. Their hearts were not right towards God ; they sought not the knowledge of the truth, and what they sought not, they *did* not obtain.

But Lady Amelia daily and carefully sought the Lord, and acted on what was already revealed to her.

Things were in this state in the family of the Marquis of Vainall, when his Lordship’s *ci-devant* tutor, the wealthy Rector of Passaway, the Reverend Dr Pelham, and his wife, bethought them of availing themselves of the Marquis’s frequent invitations of spending a month or two with him in Edinburgh.

Accordingly, on the day they had fixed, they arrived in a comfortable chaise and pair, with a pug, named Cupid, seated between them ; a gentleman's gentleman, and a lady's maid upon the dickey. Such was the live stock. An imperial was upon the top of the carriage ; a large trunk behind ; and in the inside, innumerable band-boxes, and wig-boxes, and writing-boxes, and work-boxes, all intimating great care in the adornment of the outward man and woman, or else a long intended sojourn. In the front pocket, there were biscuits for Cupid, and *bon-bons* innumerable for his mistress. In the pocket, at Dr Pelham's side, there was the last Review ; Bishop Bigot's " Address to the Clergy of his Diocese on the rapid Progress of Methodism ; " the " Art of Preserving Health ; " and Eataway's 'Treatise upon the Gout. On the side of Mrs Pelham, there were two or three volumes of *La Belle Assemblée*, and two new novels by Mrs Singaway ; one entitled " Heart and no Heart ; " the other, " The Fatal Ring."

These valuable meats for the mind were seized and carried out by their respective owners ; while the other articles were consigned to the abigail and valet.

The Doctor and his Lady were received with open arms in the hospitable mansion of the Marquis ; and as there was no company expected, they were solicited to dispense with the ceremony of dressing before dinner. But this by no means suited the taste of Mrs

Pelham, who considered that day as lost, in which she had no opportunity of shewing her taste in dress. She therefore retired to study an elegant undress, which cost her more trouble than putting on one of her puff robes would have done.

Dr Pelham had been educated at Oxford ; and a living being offered him, he recognized all the articles of the Church of England as a matter of course ; but instead of speaking of his faith, we shall leave it to speak for itself. In his youth, he danced, hunted, and played on the violin, and was an adept at whist, and all other gentlemanly recreations. When at the Rectory, he preached every Sunday an elegant short discourse, in which there was no other evil than the sin of omission. He was now 70 ; the dancing, hunting, and violin were given up, and left him more time for his bottle and his whist. And, as after a life of labour, rest is permissible, he spent six months of the year in travelling for the recovery of his health, (for all moral people expect to live for ever) with Mrs Pelham. This kindred soul was invested in the form of a little dressed-out Englishwoman, some years younger than her mate. They had no children, and their affections all centered in their own peculiar pleasures ; his, in what he called comforts, but what might be more justly termed luxury ; hers in dress and company. But as women have more *besoin d'aimer* than men, to fill all the vacuums of her soul, she had a pug-dog, the

aforementioned Cupid, who might be said, like the King of France, never to die, as a successor to his name and honours was immediately appointed upon the death of each incumbent. This was Cupid the 5th, who had the honour of accompanying them on their visit to Scotland ; and he was received, along with those who might be called his adopted parents, with all the hospitality usually practised at the Marquis of Vain-all's.

As there was no company at the Marquis's house on the day of their arrival, the Doctor and his ancient pupil had ample time to talk over old stories. Being jovial companions, the bottle was passed freely ; and the Marquis felt assured that no undue excess could be committed in company with a clergyman of advanced years, and elevated station in the Church of England.

Being of a communicative turn, when the ladies left the room, he made known to Dr Pelham the very unpleasant turn (as he termed it) that his daughter Amelia had taken. " How it has seized the girl I do not know," said he ; " but the disease only shewed itself palpably about a month ago, though it must have been much longer than that working in her mind." He then described the symptoms, amongst which were, " reading of the Bible, observance of the Sabbath, love of beggars," &c.

Dr Pelham shook his head. "I sincerely hope she is not an actual Methodist," said he.

"Why, I cannot actually say," answered the Marquis, "what are her private opinions, nor do I very well know what the Methodist tenets are. I have always kept my head clear of these matters, and have made it a point never to bewilder my brain on any such subjects. I am sure you will acknowledge that I am in the right."

"Perfectly so," replied Dr Pelham; "and without intending to flatter you, I wish all would follow your example in that as well as in many other matters. You are an honest man, my lord, and an honest man is the noblest work of God. Tell me what sect will dare to contradict that sentiment."

The Marquis bowed, and took the compliment as a just tribute to his merits.

"Strange times," continued Dr Pelham, "when boarding-school misses pretend to teach *us*."

"I cannot say Amelia is dictatorial to others," said the Marquis; "but strangely obstinate in maintaining her own opinions when attacked. I cannot allow myself to think that the girl is an actual Methodist. She goes regularly with her mother and sisters to Dr Sweetley's every Sunday. Indeed I always make a point to go there myself, when I have no particular engagement. 'Tis a proper example

that every nobleman and gentleman should set to his servants. I cannot approve of my neighbour Mr Freethink, who never enters a church. People ought to seem to believe these things. I know many worthy people in England who go to their private pews, where they are not much seen, and read the newspapers, all for the sake of example. The fact is, we have no hold over the common people in any other way. But let us be moderate in all things. Now what is very ridiculous in Amelia's character, is, that nothing will make her miss church; though she should be up ever so late on Saturday night, still she rises to go to church on Sunday."

"From what you tell me, I fear she is a little bit," said Dr Pelham. "How can you account for her having taken that turn? Has she been associating with any of these wild sectarians?"

"Not that I know of," said the Marquis; "she was always a quiet girl; but the Marchioness did a very rash thing, contrary to my advice, in taking into the family, as waiting maid for her daughter, a decided Presbyterian."

"There it is," said Dr Pelham, "that would finish it; I have no doubt she has been throwing in a word now and then; you may depend upon it; they are like the Catholics in that respect; they leave no stone unturned to make converts. 'Tis just the same

with us in Dundershire ; would you believe it, I often preach to empty benches, when my neighbour Faithful draws the whole country after him, with his methodistical rant ?”

“ They are a sad set,” said the Marquis ; “ and I have no doubt they are either acting a part, or are the tools of disaffected people. I wonder government does not interfere ; I would really make it sedition to attend a Methodist meeting. My friend Free-think, Member for the Borough of Buyall, has serious thoughts of laying a bill before Parliament to this effect. I mean for the suppression of Fanaticism and Methodism ; for I hear they are really spreading over the country to a most alarming degree.”

Dr Pelham shook his head once more. “ Why, my lord, there is a great deal of good principle in that suggestion ; but I think such a bill could have no salutary effect in the present disturbed state of the country ; for, in general, leave these fanatics freedom in religious points, and they are very loyal subjects, however they may be made the dupes of designing men. Indeed, it is one of their tenets to pay tribute to Cæsar.”

“ It is difficult to come at the truth in every case,” said the Marquis ; “ but, as you remark, it may be better to leave them alone at present, and of two evils to choose the least.—Better be overstocked with Methodists than radical reformers in our country. We

cannot surely accuse the radicals, either high or low, of being too religious.

“ True,” said Pelham ; “ but cannot people be moderate in all things, like you and I ?—Take my word for it, too much religion is as bad as too little.—‘ Be not righteous overmuch,’ saith Solomon.”

“ I thought that had been in the Revelations,” said the Marquis.

“ Oh, no,” said Pelham ; “ I thought you used to be better acquainted with the Scriptures.”

“ I know them tolerably well,” said the Marquis ; “ but I cannot be expected to know them so intimately as a divine of your age and experience.”

“ Certainly not, my lord, ’tis not your vocation ; but, would you believe it, some of those low methodical fellows pretend to know more about the matter than either you or I ? To be sure, I allow they have the words of the Bible at their finger ends, but it is the height of presumption and pride in them, to pretend to know their meaning better than old respectable divines.”

“ High presumption indeed,” said the Marquis.

“ Nevertheless it is a certain fact, I assure you, my lord. However, I shall preach for my friend Dr Sweetly next Sunday, and I hope I shall be able, now you have put me upon the ground, to say something that may have an effect upon Lady Amelia.

From the account you give me of her, I do not think she is as yet thoroughly ruined."

"This is truly kind of you," said the Marquis; "come, let us take a glass of wine to her reformation."

"No more, my lord; I have already finished my bottle of claret. Moderation in all things, you know, is our motto."

So saying, they arose, and took possession of the arm-chairs on each side of the fire; the conversation by degrees began to flag; and, alternately nodding, they fell fast asleep.

Soft tones were heard in the drawing-room. Lady Maria sung, "Gently touch the warbling lyre," to the harp. Mrs Pelham sat as auditor, with Cupid upon her knee, doing all she could to keep him quiet. Mrs Pelham had no feeling for music, and indeed little for anything; but she knew that it was proper to hold her tongue, and to have on her listening face, when ladies of quality were so good as play on the harp, and sing to her.

When Lady Maria paused, Mrs Pelham expressed her admiration in the following terms:—"Beautiful, beautiful indeed! Will you be so good as play that over again? How very well a lady looks at the harp! What a beautiful piece of furniture it is! I really must get Dr Pelham to buy us one when we go home. Our drawing-room wants something

sadly at one end next the low window. Nothing would suit it but a harp—a table would be awkward ; and flowers bring so many insects, that I am quite sick of them. How beautifully it is gilded ! Really the flounce of your gown, and your white shoe looks very pretty peeping out amongst the gold. But do, pray, give us that over again, or something a little more lively. Can you play *The Woodpecker*, or *The Flower Girl*, or——”

“ Here is a beautiful march of Handel’s,” said Lady Maria, who had by this time discovered that she might as well please herself, as she had observed that Mrs Pelham would not have distinguished Handel’s touch from an ordinary hand-organ. But Mrs Pelham could listen to words, though she could not attend to music ; and she yawned, and caressed Cupid.

Lady Maria had no notion of accommodating either her conversation or her music to people of small minds ; she was in all things a self-pleaser. But Lady Amelia, who really wished to make all happy around her, sat down in her sister’s place, and played what was quite opposed to her own fine taste,—airs, words and music adapted to the ears and associations of Mrs Pelham, who was now really animated and charmed.

Lady Amelia relished as little, if not less, than her sister, the conversation, or what might be more pro-

perly designated, the trifling gossip of Mrs Pelham ; but hope in all things gilds the future to young minds, and it cheered her with the prospect of better things when her father and Dr Pelham should join them. It promised to her inexperienced mind, that the Doctor, being a clergyman, and one who professed to know the Scriptures, would surely support her in all her schemes of benevolence, and be able, from the treasure of his collected wisdom, to give her information on the points dearest to her heart. In the meantime, she ventured to ask Mrs Pelham, if it had been a severe winter for the poor in their part of England ?

“ I know very little about what you call the poor,” said Mrs Pelham ; “ but I’m sure summer and winter are equally severe upon the rich ; for the poor-rates exceed all belief.—I cannot say I ever spoke to any of the poor about us,” continued she, “ but I hear and believe they are an idle, thankless, worthless set.”

The Marchioness here uttered her voice in support and confirmation of the sentiments delivered by Mrs Pelham, and added, that the poor were the same everywhere—an idle dirty race, who preyed upon the rich, and made dupes of the good-natured of both sexes,—glancing a look full of meaning at Lady Amelia. “ But, talking of the poor,” said she, “ I know no man so benevolent as my friend Dr Purdie

It would really fill you with admiration the traits that I could tell you of him. Do you know he sits an hour every forenoon reading to Lord John Puff, who has had a paralytic stroke ; and he gave twenty pounds out of his own pocket, to my certain knowledge, to the poor Handtomouths."

My readers are already acquainted with those two great actions of Dr Purdie ; but the Marchioness made it a rule, whenever benevolence or charity was mentioned, to repeat them, as a proof, that what she deemed real charity was only practised by those who held the most moderate tenets in religion.

"He must be a charming man," said Mrs Pelham.

"Oh! the very best of men," said the Marchioness.
"I never knew such a man."

'Tis strange, the enthusiastic admiration bestowed by worldlings upon what may be called the comparatively easy, gentlemanly parts of charity ; while the exertions and unwearied self-denial practised by Christians in this branch of their duty, are often passed over in silence ; and, when noticed, turned into ridicule. But "the world will love its own" in this, as in all other things.

Dr Pelham and the Marquis having finished their nap, came to take their share in this conversazione ; and Lady Amelia sat with eager eyes and listening ears, to hear the words of wisdom she expected to

flow from the lips of Dr Pelham. But in the course of a short time she made the discovery, that it does not always follow, that a clergyman and pious Christian are one and the same character, and that there was too much truth in a frequent observation of her father's, that clergymen were only men.

CHAPTER VII.

ALL who have been accustomed to sleep out of their own houses, or to pay visits that have been intended to last for days, weeks, or months, must have observed, that perfect ease in a new habitation never takes place, till after having enjoyed a good sleep, and felt assured that the beds are comfortable. It was not then till the day after their arrival, that Dr and Mrs Pelham felt quite at home.

The Marquis and Dr Pelham passed the forenoon in walking up and down, and seeing some of the numerous improvements of Edinburgh; and Mrs Pelham found full occupation in superintending her maid in the task of unpacking and arranging the various contents of the Imperial. She had also subjects of agreeable reflection, or rather anticipation, for the Marchioness had received a ticket for her seat at a ball that evening at the Honourable Mrs Splash's, and till the happy moment when dressing should commence, the dinner, whist, and a little gossiping, helped to feather the wings of time.

About eleven o'clock at night the Marchioness

having given the last touches to her complexion, stepped into her coach along with her daughters, Lady Maria and Lady Amelia, and Mrs Pelham. Lady Jane having danced till four o'clock the morning before, and being completely knocked up, was unable to accompany them.

“ My girls are so delicate,” said their mother, “ they are really quite unfit for a winter’s campaign. Amelia, upon the whole, is the stoutest, yet she is the laziest creature, and would absolutely sleep the whole night.”

This ball was given on the 29th of February, which is perhaps the time when gaiety is at its height, and when a ball is carried on with the greatest spirit and vivacity. About April, which is generally the last dregs of an Edinburgh winter, the aspect of the ball-rooms is very different. They may then be compared to gardens in the end of summer ; the beauties are faded, and so are the flowers, and nought retains the appearance of freshness but the evergreens, or, as the wall-flowers of the ball-room may be called, the ever-reds, “ whose complexion comes as the maid fetches and carries it.”

But even the break-up balls have their advocates. “ Much may be said on both sides,” Mrs Supwell used to say ; “ If I am not in town early in the season, I prefer giving it late. Like game, or any other rarity, the first and the last is always what is

most esteemed. Besides, if I give any entertainment in the meridian of the winter, the whole world are in town ; my house will only hold half of my world, and t'other half are offended ; at the very time when they are complaining of the bore of being obliged to go to so many balls. But by chusing my time, all my friends who are in town are invited ; the rest are rid of a bore, and fully satisfied with my sincerity, when I pay them off with regrets for their absence."

The Honourable Mrs Chimein agreed with Mrs Supwell, that her reasons were unanswerable ; but she also agreed with Mrs Splash, that she had chosen well in selecting the 29th of February for her *At Home*. 'Twas the midnight hour when Lady Amelia sat down to breathe at the end of a long dance, while her partner, being an enthusiast in dancing, left her for a few minutes to secure another of his favourites for the next dance. " Miserable and unsatisfying are the pleasures of the worldling." This Lady Amelia felt, though without any idea of sin in the conformity. " It must, it must be my own discontented heart, (thought she) ; yet surely there are pleasures in this world of a higher order ; there are pleasures in a better taste. Can gilded lamps with nature's stars compare ?" and she sighed as she sat down near a window, of which the curtains were drawn up to give air. Her meditations, however, were speedily

interrupted by the approach of Captain Skipwell, a hero amongst belles, a beau of beaux, whose heart was in his heels, and whose heels were in his heart. He was a delightful creature—a pleasant fellow—full of life, full of vivacity. Who was not happy to have Skipwell for a partner? How much laughter was excited by his jokes! How many smiles were tributes called forth by his repartees! He was the life of this, and of all balls!—He had gained a character which Sir Isaac Newton could not have attained, and which rendered him invaluable, as the promoter of life in every form; and this character sat upon him with ease; he looked the character; he was the character; he acted not the character; it cost him no effort; he feared not to lose it, and the misses all felt, and declared, that he was a fascinating beau.

Captain Skipwell stepped up to Lady Amelia, and bowed with the air of a man who was never refused. Lady Amelia could scarcely hear, amidst the sound of the music, what were the words which should have met her ear; but the air, the look, the motion with his hand, all said, in terms not to be misunderstood, “You will not refuse to dance with me?” Accustomed to oblige, she arose amidst the envy of many a neglected fair, and thus happy in a partner, she prepared to cross hands, and perform the duties of an ordinary country-dance; but her lively part-

ner gave turns ordinary and extraordinary, he twisted her round, and whirled her down, till the gentle composed Lady Amelia sighed to find pleasure was toil.

The Marchioness viewed them with approving eyes. She knew that Captain Skipwell was heir to six thousand a-year, and would have thought a daughter of hers indolent indeed, who could have wearied with such a prospect in view.—“ Amelia looks tired,” thought she; “ but a little fatigue is well worth enduring, could she but dance herself into six thousand a-year.”

Dr Spleen was seated by the Marchioness; he was a young old gentleman, or rather an old young gentleman,—not that I mean to say, that he had an old head upon young shoulders, but he was a young man who saw the follies of youth, with as little allowance, as an old bachelor of seventy. His remarks were generally severe, and, of course, as offensive as all truths spoken in plain language must ever be to ears polite. He remarked to the Marchioness, that Captain Skipwell was one of the few young men who danced with energy before supper.

“ For my part,” said he, “ I would never allow a daughter of mine to remain till the intoxication takes place.”

“ The what?” said the Marchioness, with surprise.

“ The intoxication,” repeated Spleen, “ which I have remarked invariably takes place, more or less, after supper, and is the reason why the dancing goes on with so much more spirit than before. It is, in reality, the stimulus that whirls them from the top of the dance to the bottom in a moment, and imparts such a spirit, that their progress seems only impeded by the wall at the end.”

’Tis a strange contradiction in human nature, that almost all unconverted people enjoy ill-natured remarks, though, at the same time, they dislike the person from whom they proceed.

The Marchioness experienced this in conversing with Dr Spleen, who, finding her apparently amused, though expressing herself shocked, continued his remarks with the same truth, and the same ill-nature ; but increasing in force and strength of expression, as all pleasant ill-natured people do.

“ The heat is insufferable,” said he ; “ allow me to bring you a little negus ?” and without waiting for an answer, he resigned his seat, which was immediately seized by a character of a totally different description, Sir James Sempil.

He was a middle-aged man, and every one said, —“ What a pleasant good tempered man Sir James Sempil is !” —He bowed softly, smiled as he bowed, and bowed as he sat down.

“ What a charming ball !” said he.

“ Delightful !” said the Marchioness.

“ It quite enlivens my spirits to see so many people happy. What a benevolent-hearted woman Mrs Splash is ; she delights in making people happy !”

“ And old people too,” said the Marchioness, casting a glance into the corners where heads and faces, on which time had laid some touches, presented themselves to view.

“ What pretty girl is that,” said Sir James, taking out his glass, “ who is dancing with Captain Skipwell ?”

“ ’Tis my daughter,” said the Marchioness—“ Did you not know her ?”

“ Really I did not ; she is looking so uncommonly well. Not,” said he, correcting himself, “ that I do not always think her pretty ; but to-night she looks beautiful.”

“ The girl is well enough, but she is no beauty ; Jane is the beauty,” said the Marchioness.

“ Pardon me—allow me to dissent, without differing from you. You have, in my opinion, more than one beauty in your family.”

“ Beauty is but a fading flower,” said the Marchioness, “ and, as I tell my daughters, lasts but a very few years.—Are you going to stay long ? I feel a little weary.”

“ Oh ! to the very end,” replied Sir James ; “ I would not pay Mrs Splash so bad a compliment as to leave her charming ball before it was finished.”

“ I think I shall do so too,” rejoined the Marchioness ; “ for it is very unkind and awkward to one’s friends to leave them in the lurch when the pleasure of the evening is over.”

“ With me,” said Sir James, “ the pleasure is never over till the last dance ; but I see Mrs Splash looking as if in search of some one for a partner for one of her friendless misses. I shall go and offer my services ; for a friend in need is a friend indeed.”

The Marchioness could not help admiring his good nature, when contrasted with the temper of her former companion ; but gave the preference to the amusing qualities of Spleen. “ ’Tis possible to be too sweet,” thought she. She had fallen into her usual train of castle-building. On the foundation of this long dance, she had built the superstructure of a match between Amelia and Captain Skipwell—when the Captain came up to her, his vivacity a little abated, to express his regret for the loss of his fair partner.

“ In spite of my entreaties, and the delights of the ball,” said he, “ she cruelly insisted on going home.”

“ What !—already !—and only one o’clock !” said the Marchioness, with some chagrin. “ She is a singularly lazy creature that girl. What shall I say, and what will Mrs Splash think of her ?”

Mrs Splash, however, never asked ; and Mrs Splash never thought of the matter ; and the ball went on very well without her. The labourers in the fashionable world continued their occupations till towards five, when the music ceased—the tea was handed about—the doors were opened—and those who had drained pleasure to the dregs departed. Other sounds now had their turn—the chairmen's vociferations in their native Gaelic—the opening of doors, creaking of poles, tread of feet, &c. &c. At last all died away, and the beauties found themselves before their looking-glasses, yawning, and unsatisfied ; while their wearied Abigails, who had been poring over novels, *en attendant*, unpinned their locks, and gave freedom to their curls. Some wasted a little more time in talking over the joys that were past ; others, overcome with fatigue, hastened to bed—all alike forgetful of the God who made them. A few whose religion was form, hurried over their formal prayer, and, self-satisfied, fell fast asleep.

The Marchioness, on coming home, observed a light in Amelia's room ; and feeling a little curiosity to know how she was employed, stepped in, and found her in her dressing-gown, reading the Bible.

“ Why, girl, what, in the name of wonder, have you been putting off your time with ? You might as well have been at the ball. I shall be in bed before you yet. What have you been about ? ”

“ Mamma,” said Amelia, blushing, “ you know I cannot go to bed without saying my prayers and reading my Bible.”

“ Well, there can be no objections to that—I say my prayers also ; but I’m sure you may perform your devotions in five minutes. The Bible forbids you to say long prayers, you know.”

“ Ah, mamma ! when I come in from a ball, the music sounds in my ears—the gay figures float before my eyes—and sometimes the conversation I have heard recurs to my imagination. I cannot all at once collect my thoughts ; and my Bible tells me I must not draw near to God with my lips, when my heart is far from him.”

“ Nonsense ! How can you allow such vagaries to enter your mind ? You are becoming the strangest girl I ever knew. However, you have nearly had time to perform all your tasks in proper form now, so go to your bed, and take care you do not put such nonsensical ideas into the heads of your sisters. Good night, my dear ; I hope you will live to be wiser.”

Lady Amelia sighed, and thought, Oh that I knew what was right !—“ There can be no harm in a ball,” said she to herself—“ a ball is surely an innocent amusement, and I ought to enjoy innocent amusement ; but no amusement can be innocent which makes me neglect my duty to God ; therefore, though a ball is harmless, to stay too late at a ball is very

wrong. God forgive me for the many times I have offended in this point !”

Lady Amelia had been an Edinburgh belle for three years ; and there was a time when more self-denial than was now exerted, would have been requisite to make her fly from scenes usually alluring to the young and the gay. But the strong enthusiastic love of what was really lovely, and of truly good report, had taken possession of her mind. Her conscience was tender, and though still on the false ground of working out a righteousness of her own, yet sincere and humble were her efforts to know the truth, and far, far above the ordinary standard of self-righteous characters was the point at which she soared in her own strength.

CHAPTER VIII.

SATURDAY passed without anything remarkable. I feel that every day has a character of its own, though I cannot describe it. Saturday is not like Monday, though the difference is not easily defined. The custom of its being a day of relaxation to young people, perhaps endears it more in after life than all the other days of the week—the Lord's day always excepted to pious minds. The memory of joys that are past, possesses a kind of reflected pleasure, less alloyed, more unmixed, than the pleasure itself; for where is the earthly pleasure unmixed with pain? In life, as in a fine painting, the hand of time softens the bold, the harsh touches—blending and mellowing all the parts into a pleasing whole.

But the Saturday I now celebrate was shorter than the other days of the week, to the votaries of the preceding night's dissipation, now at eleven o'clock still sunk in slumber.

“Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep,”

had paid to them his ready visit; and had been so

well received, that as yet he shewed no inclination to raise his downy pinions, and take his flight. But time brings round all events, and what with gaping, yawning, rising, dressing, dining, dressing again, they all found themselves in the midst of a large evening party, given by the Marchioness, and with very much the same circle as on the two preceding evenings. For there are circles and sets in Edinburgh as well as elsewhere, where only certain atoms of fashion are expected to move.

“What a charming ball we had last night at Mrs Splash’s,” was echoed at least a thousand times from beau to belle, and from belle to beau, during the evening.

“This is an amazing crowd,” was another phrase that frequently met the ear. It was a very good route, everybody said; and what everybody said must be true.

Dr and Mrs Pelham were introduced wherever heads could be found at leisure to make a bow, and space for the introduced to advance to receive it. The whisper went round that Dr Pelham was a celebrated preacher, and was to preach on Sunday for Dr Sweetly in the morning. All promised to attend, not indeed to honour the Lord, but to honour Dr Pelham, as young Dr Spleen observed.

All who had seats in this fashionable place of worship, were persons who piqued themselves on possess-

ing moral character ; that is to say, they did not transgress the laws of the country ; and their motto was, “ When at Rome, do as Rome does.” Being moral characters, they piqued themselves on shewing a good example to their neighbours, and took their servants, horses, and carriages for this pious purpose, to wait for them at the church-door ; in defiance of the ~~sixth~~ commandment, which tells them that not only men and women, but oxen and asses, shall have rest on the Sabbath day. But moral characters have privileges in interpreting the Scriptures, which others cannot arrogate to themselves.

’Tis perhaps well for society that there are even such moral characters. Alas ! there are others, who seem only to acknowledge three commands in the Decalogue as of any binding obligation—the 6th, 7th, and 8th ; and these three may be set aside when occasion invites, under the genteel device of duel, divorce, and peculation of public money, or wilful contraction of debt with fortunes already much impaired.

There was considerable bustle in the mansion of the Marquis of Vainall in getting breakfast over, and performing the duties of the morning toilet, so as to admit of all being in time for church.

The Marquis’s coach, and the carriage of Dr Pelham, at last drove off, and they entered the church a few minutes after the service was begun. The peo-

ple were all well dressed, and many a well-meaning mortal was there, and many a young creature, whose ears would have been open, and whose heart would have been touched, had they heard the truth. But it was not from Dr Pelham they were doomed to hear it. The following extract, taken down and preserved by one of his admirers, may serve as a specimen of the sermon. It was not to be supposed that Dr Pelham had leisure to compose any new discourse during his summer excursion, but this was one that he deemed quite a show-off composition, and which had always called forth plaudits of admiration wherever it had been pronounced. Dr Pelham's manner was also much admired—he raised his eyes, waved his hand, paused, hemmed, just when eyes should be raised, a hand should be waved, a pause made, a hem given.

His text was,—“He that gathereth not with us, scattereth.” “My brethren,” said he, “the learned Huntagreek, in his criticism upon this passage of Scripture, ascribes a meaning to the Hebrew verb, that, in my opinion, the Hebrew verb does not possess, and cannot in any sense or tense be admitted. Littlewit and Alphabamboozle also have written folios upon this subject, but with both of them I entirely disagree; for although learning often throws light upon dark passages, it as often casts them into deeper obscurity. I shall not, therefore, intrude upon your time, by quoting from commentators that

have written largely, and, I may add, wisely, upon this subject, but I shall confine myself to the meaning common sense points out, viz. that the word ‘us’ refers to the established church. The passage thus interpreted, according to its obvious meaning, conveys a warning to all real Christians, not to follow after those who do not belong to the church, and whose doctrines may have a tendency to weaken its influence. We all have enough of our duty pointed out to us in the plain texts of Scripture, and have nothing to do with the others. Let us ask our own consciences—let us consult our own hearts, and we shall never do wrong. We have all our little weaknesses; but God is merciful, and will not take notice of the imperfections that yet float in characters which are otherwise faultless. Man is a noble creature; in form and apprehension how like a God. He is formed with powers capable of relishing the highest degrees and orders of enjoyment here and hereafter. And it will be found that it rests with himself to attain to every good, temporal and spiritual, in the never-ending currents of eternity, or in the limited streams of existence allotted to us in time.

“Whatsoever is praiseworthy in the sight of man, and suitable to his ideas of right, we may rest assured, is also right in the sight of God.

“Oh my brethren!” cried the preacher, warmed with his subject, and breaking out in a burst of en-

thusiasm prophetic of a close—"Oh ! my brethren, my dear brethren, let not the thoughts of the King of Terrors fill you with apprehensions. Death is inevitable, but the consolations of a death-bed are numerous to the virtuous. Then the thoughts of a well-spent life speak peace to the soul, and rob the grisly monarch of his sting—the exulting spirit, like the chrysalis, bursts from its tomb, and flies rejoicing to the realms of light."

He drew several death-bed scenes in a manner so truly affecting, as to call forth the tears of many in the congregation, and in particular from the eyes of the sympathetic Lady Amelia, who determined, since she had the power, and since good deeds were the way to heaven, to abound in them more and more, that she might gain a consummation so devoutly to be wished.

As it happened, Mr Mansfield had, on the same day, chosen the same text ; but oh ! how different were the conclusions he drew from it ; how earnestly did he exhort Christians to engage with all their power in the service of Christ. "How can we love him, and yet be lukewarm in his service?" said he ; "in the service of that Great Being who first loved us ?

"Can sinful beings lay claim to the reward of righteousness?" he continued. "Perish the presumptuous

thought ; the offspring of ignorance ; the powerful delusion of the Prince of Darkness.

“ In that hour, when the silver cord shall be loosed, when the golden bowl is broken, when the pitcher is broken at the fountain, when the wheel is broken at the cistern, in that hour of fear and terror to the natural man, oh ! what will our fancied righteousness avail us ? Then the believer will feel of a truth, that his Almighty Redeemer alone can shield and guide him through the vale and shadow of death ; and his hope, the result of faith, will be solely in the mercy of God, through Christ.”—Lady Amelia’s maid, Euphemia Dressall, gave her mistress a note or two of the sermon, as she dressed her for dinner.

“ Oh ! mem, he was great against judging according to man’s judgment. Things highly esteemed among men are abomination in the eyes of God. He really exerted himself the day.”

“ I dare say Mr Mansfield is a very good man,” said Lady Amelia ; “ but he preaches methodistical doctrines. Good works must save us. Dr Pelham is right ; could we only practise what he preaches. Dr Pelham is an excellent scholar, Papa says, and I have no doubt is a much cleverer man than Mr Mansfield, and of course must know better what is sound doctrine.” She had yet to learn, that “ the wisdom of man is foolishness with God ;” and that “ not many wise, not many noble, are called.”

“ I’m no gude at arguing,” said Dressall ; “ but eh ! I wish your ladyship would gang and pass your remarks upon Mr Mansfield. I’m wae to think ony body should think little o’ him, without hearin’ him.”

“ Well, perhaps I shall go some Sunday,” said Lady Amelia. “ I won’t require you again to-night, so you may go to the evening church, if you please.”

“ Thank you, mem,” said Dressall.

This was a day of uncommon piety in the family of the Marquis of Vainall ; and, as he remarked to Dr Pelham, he would just make a day of it, since they had begun so well. He therefore selected a volume of his favourite divine, Dean Moderate’s sermons. A sermon against enthusiasm ; text, “ Be not righteous over much.”

“ That is one of my favourite texts,” said the Marquis : “ and one that you and I exemplify in our practice, as well as that other equally judicious precept, “ Take a little wine for thy stomach’s sake.”

This day’s exertions in the way of piety had been great in the Marquis of Vainall’s, and most of the members of the family privately thought they had laid up a stock of good works, upon which they could draw freely, as an apology for indolent Sabbaths for some time to come. They repaired to their chambers, to recover the fatigues of the day, and soon were “ deep sunk in sleep and silk, and heaps of down.”

The spirit of indifference in religious matters is by

no means confined to the habitations of the rich ; and the same Sabbath passed over Sarah Bell's head in Little Wark's Close, in a less luxurious, and more godless manner than in the family of Vainall. As usual, she lay longer in bed, the Sunday being, as she observed, a day of rest ; and, to use an appropriate, though vulgar proverb, " as the old cock crows, the young one learns ;" for her sons, Willy and Jack, followed her example, and after they arose, spent the greater part of the day in playing with idlers in the street.

Sarah thought no more of the exhortation to go to church, that Mrs Miller had given her. Indeed, all good advice for many years had always gone in at one ear, and out at the other. But she did not beg upon Sunday, which she called keeping the Sabbath-day holy, and piqued herself on it accordingly.

She took her usual cordial, and concluded the Sunday as she had begun it—thoughtless of the Great Being who gave her her being, unacquainted with her Redeemer, reckless of the future, and unrepentant of the past.

CHAPTER IX.

· La vertu donne toujours la force d'accomplir ce qu'elle commande."

"TWAS towards the beginning of March, on Monday morning, that the sun arose, as if intending to exert his power in dissolving the snow, which had lain some days upon the ground. It was a day when careful mothers sent forth their children to inhale the air. It was a day when those who were under the power of physicians longed for their arrival, in hopes of liberation ; for when would such another day occur for breathing the air of summer, amidst the snows of winter ?

The sun, the gift of a bountiful Creator, rises equally upon the evil and the good ; and it shone in Little Wark's close with as much radiance as in the gayer streets of Edinburgh.

Jack Bell was out in the close, enjoying its influence, while Sarah was sitting by the fire-side, enjoying her snuff. Jack was pursuing the pastimes of childhood, which have enjoyments that after life can

scarcely conceive ; such as walking through a dub, or pool, occasioned by water collecting in one spot in the street ; running after horses and carriages, and vehicles of every description, from the wheels of the sharpener of scissars, to the dickey of the barouche and four. Jack had been inspecting the launching of a small vessel, cut with a knife, intended for navigating the streams of Little Wark's close, when he came hastily in, and told his mother, that he saw a lady coming down the close. This was a part of the duty in which his mother carefully instructed him.

“ Wha is she ?” said Sarah.

“ I dinna ken,” said Jack ; “ but she has on a grand pelisse, covered with silk tassells, and a hat wi' a heap of feathers in the top o't.”

Mrs Bell, not satisfied with this narrative, bundled up Amelia in what was called the bed, and rose to ascertain the uncertain point herself.

“ Preserve me,” said she ; “ sure as I am livin', it's Lady Amelia Truefeel her ain sell ! Can she be coming here, I wonder ?” with a kind of foreboding of what might really happen.

Sarah hid two empty bottles, also a plate with butter, and the tea-pot. She then took Amelia on her knee, bade Willy sit down, put on her distressed interesting look, and desired Jack to watch her ladyship and shew her the way in, “ if she was spcaren for the house.”

It was indeed Lady Amelia. Touched by what Dr Sweetly, Dr Pelham, and others had said upon the necessity of having good deeds to console her on her death-bed, as well as prompted by some indescribable feelings of compassion which swelled the veins of her heart, she bethought her of doing some good deed in her own person.

She began to reflect, that the fear of man had hitherto prevented her from following the dictates of the power within, which impelled her to relieve the unfortunate. She had likewise some scruples of conscience in doing this unknown to her parents. She was almost certain of her being positively commanded not to follow the example of those, who (as the enemies to charity pretend,) neglect home duties, that they may attend to those of their poor neighbours, residing in lanes and closes.

This was Lady Amelia's first attempt; and none who have not experienced it can judge of the emotions which fill a feeling heart when the abodes of apparent poverty and distress are first laid open to it. The bad air of the close, the wretched figures, —the dirty children,—the *tout ensemble*,—was not calculated to fill the senses of a fine lady with pleasure.

The scenes of that charity so often painted in novels, and so unlike the wretched realities of life, were the only pictures at present impressed on the

imagination of Lady Amelia Truefeel. Her delicate feet nearly slipped as she descended the close, while the ragged Jack stood at a respectful distance, watching for what he might deem a fit opportunity for offering his services.

The snow began to yield to the influence of the sun, and though the temperature above was more genial, yet the ground beneath was less agreeable to foot-passengers.

Lady Amelia entered the Cowgate, and Jack still followed her. She now looked about, and saw a woman more respectable-looking than the rest, to whom she addressed herself.

“ Pray, good woman, can you tell me where Little Wark’s Close is ?”

“ Houts, mem,” replied the woman, “ that’s it ye’re just come out o’ this minute ; ye cam throw it the noo.”

“ Do you know a woman named Mrs Bell, who lives in it,” said Lady Amelia.

“ What is she ?” said the woman, replying, according to the Scotch method of answering a question.

“ She is a widow,” said Lady Amelia.

“ Is she a lady, mem ?”—“ No,” said Lady Amelia.—“ Does she sell greens ?” —“ No.”—“ Does she keep a callander ?”—“ No.”—“ Then I dinna

ken her, mem," said the woman ; " but if ye'll ask at Mrs Macrisk's, who sells the old clothes in there," pointing to a stand with an old coat, shoes, hats, boots, " she'll be able to tell you."

Lady Amelia's heart began to fail, but she determined to go through with it.—The provoking Jack had not yet made up his mind to speak to so fine a lady, but stood ready primed for returning fire, if she should speak to him first.

Lady Amelia went to Mrs Macrisk's, who told her that the person she was in search of lived at the top of the wynd, and in the first entry thereof.

Lady Amelia retraced her steps with considerable disgust, and asked, as she was directed, for Mrs Bell, at another woman near the top of the wynd.

" There's yen o' that name ben that second door," said a woman, pointing to a dirty low entry, which Lady Amelia's high-crowned bonnet did not admit of her entering without stooping.—" But what is she, mem ?" said the woman, recollecting that she had omitted this ordinary Scotch method of answer to all queries of the kind.

" She is a widow," replied Lady Amelia.

" Then this canna be her, mem, for this woman has a man and six bairns."

" Is there no widow Bell in this close ?" said Lady Amelia, whose patience began to be a little exhausted.

“ Is her name Sarah, mem ?”

“ Yes,” said Lady Amelia.

“ Oh ! I didna ken it was her,” said the woman ;
“ she has been lang here, and lives at the foot of the
close.—Tam, gae wa’ before the lady, and shew her
the way.”

Barefooted, half-naked, Tom flew like an arrow
before Lady Amelia, warmed by the hopes of re-
ward, which his services in this way had often pro-
cured for him before, from the benevolent visitors of
the various societies, who had been in this close, in
the way to and from their visits of mercy.

Tom pursued his course, without turning or wind-
ing, till he came to the entry to Sarah Bell’s house ;
and Lady Amelia found herself standing beside the
woman to whom she had first addressed herself on
entering the close.

“ Is Sarah Bell in ?” said Tam to her ; “ for here’s
a lady seekin her.”

“ Hegh me ! was it Sarah Bell ye was wantin ? Ye
ca’d her widow Bell, an’ no Sarah ; she’s my next-
door neighbour. I dinna ken whether she’s in or no.
—Sarah, are ye within ?” said she, stretching her head
in at the door ?”—“ Yes, she’s in,” said Jack, who
now found himself called upon to speak.

“ How do you know ?” said the woman to him.

“ Because she sent me to show the lady the way
in, in case she was speering for her.”

“Ye doited brat, what for did ye no tell the lady sooner?” said she.

“I didna like,” said John, roused by this attack from the respectful silence he had hitherto kept; “and I think, luckey, ye might have telt her yer-sell,” continued he.

“Di ye dare to set up your tongue to mc, ye ill-brought-up loon?” said the woman; “how was I to ken, I would like to know, that the lady was seekin for Sarah Bell, when she asked for Mrs Bell?—Gang ben, mem, to the first door on the left hand; that’s Sarah’s.”

Jack ran before her, and acted as usher in this her ladyship’s first introduction to the abodes of the poor. But no pen can describe the mingled sensations of pity, horror, disgust, and compassion, that filled Lady Amelia’s mind, on her entrance into this den of darkness and poverty. Tears flowed from her eyes, and in a tone of unfeigned compassion she addressed Sarah.

“Poor creature!” said she, “do you really live here?”

“Ay, mem,” said Sarah; “where else could the like o’ me live?”

Sarah as yet was only heard, for Lady Amelia’s eyes were not so accustomed to the darkness, as to discover her figure accurately.

“How can you breathe here?” said she.

“ Will, draw down the window,” said Sarah, pointing to a borrowed light, the one half of which was stuffed with rags.

“ Have you no other window than that ?” asked Lady Amelia.

“ No,” said Sarah ; “ the tae half of it was broken, and where am I to get money to mend it ?”

“ Send for a man this very night, and get it repaired.”

“ God bless you, mem ! It ’ill tak a crown and mair to do it.”

“ No matter ; I shall pay for it.”

“ God bless you !” was again repeated.

Lady Amelia had now so far recovered her composure and her eye-sight, as to look round for the other pieces of furniture, but none could be discerned.

“ Where do you sleep ?” said she.

“ In the corner there,” said Sarah.

“ What ! have you no bed ?”

“ No, mem, except that straw, and one blanket that covers us.”

“ Good heavens !” exclaimed Lady Amelia, and her eyes again began to flow ; “ and where do the boys sleep ?”

“ We all lie together there ; the one keeps the other warm.”

“ Oh God !” said Lady Amelia, in a tone of sup-

plication.—“ Oh that I had a bed to send you ! Perhaps——”

“ That would be ower muckle trouble,” said Sarah, in an artful tone. “ If I could scrape thegither about half a guinea, I’d certainly get a bed out o’ the Cowgate.”

“ What ! will you get one for so small a sum as that ?”

“ That I will, and a good one too ; but, waes me ! where am I to get that ? I never troubled onybody but your ladyship. When John was livin, we ne’er wanted ony thing ; but, waes me ! times are sair changed now ; we maun want beds, and meat, and clothes, and everything.”

Here Sarah put on her crying face, and contrived to squeeze out a few tears ; and Lady Amelia, whose heart always prompted her to “ weep with those that weep,” again had recourse to her handkerchief.

“ I hope things will become better with you, my poor woman.”

“ I could want onything myself,” said Sarah, “ but, waes me ! it gangs to my heart to see these wild laddies gang without schulin ; but where am I to pay for it ? they tak four shillings a-quarter !”

Nothing is quicker than thought ; and the thoughts of some people are much quicker than those of others.

Lady Amelia was silent for a few minutes, while the following thoughts passed through her head :—

“ My purse is low at present ; and I must pay ten pounds for the new dress which my mother wants me to take for the ball to be given on Jane’s birth-day. I must try to please her with a plainer one ; for Sarah Bell must be relieved. I never can meet with a more distressed family, or one that is more worthy. There can be no deception here ; I have seen it with my own eyes ; it would melt a heart of stone.”

She opened her purse strings, and so ended her cogitations.

“ Here, Mrs Bell,” said she, “ is money for your window, and also for the two first quarters for your boys’ schooling, and money to buy a bed. To-morrow morning I shall send my maid to buy clothes for you and your boys, to keep you warm in the winter. I think this will relieve your present misery in some degree.”

“ Waes me !” said Sarah ; “ I am ashamed o’ your ladyship’s goodness ; and indeed I am ashamed to speak, but my landlord is sair upon me for my rent, and if he disna get the money soon noo, he says he winna scruple to turn me to the street.”

“ How much is it ?” said Lady Amelia.

“ I pay £3 for this poor hole,” said Sarah, “ and I am owing him the half-year’s rent.”

Lady Amelia gave the sum in question, and received, in return, the warm blessings of Sarah.

“ God in Heaven bless you,” said she, “ for what

ye have done for me ! Had ye done nothing else beside, I'm sure you're weel worthy Heaven."

This she said sincerely ; for, like all workers of iniquity, her views of religion were very dark. She trusted alone to good works for admission into Heaven, both for herself and others.

Strange that the contrary doctrine should alone produce them to any degree and extent. There are indeed moral characters, in whom the sins of commission are scarcely perceptible, but in sins of omission they abound ; they are " all unprofitable servants."

" Whisht," said Mrs Bell, turning to a corner darker than darkness, where a soft whimper was heard.—Lady Amelia turned ; she saw something move, that seemed smothering under a large brown cloak.—Sarah arose, and, from under the cloak from off the straw, took up her youngest born, Amelia, Lady Amelia's name-daughter.

The half-naked child smiled on her benefactress, and stretched forth its little arms, attracted by the gay dress and sweet countenance of her ladyship. Lady Amelia, naturally fond of children, could not resist the efforts the child made to get to her, and, in spite of its dirty appearance, took it upon her knee. But the child's ambition soared higher ; its little hands were stretched up to reach the feathers in Lady Amelia's hat, and had even the boldness to touch

her lips ; so little awe feels childhood for either rank or fashion.

Her ladyship felt a little disgust at the near approach of any thing so dirty.

“ Poor thing, what a pity you are not washed !— why do you not wash her ?” said she to Mrs Bell.

“ Waes me ! whare am I to get water ?” was at her tongue’s end ; but when she recollected the various wells Lady Amelia must have seen in the streets, she changed her accustomed usual phrase into, “ Waes me ! I haena a dish even to make ready our meat in.”

Lady Amelia added two shillings for this purpose ; and, loaded with blessings, and fully satisfied that she had completely relieved Sarah Bell, she gave a shilling to the boy who had shewn her down the close, and who still waited at the door, in hopes of his reward. He bowed, and looked unutterable gratitude ; he shewed her the nearest way up, and she soon found herself at the head of the Mound.

CHAPTER X.

PRINCE'S STREET, in all the buzz and crowd of a sunny winter day, lay before Lady Amelia, who scarcely observed the different scene she was going to enter upon ; so engrossed was her mind with pleasing reflections, plans of benevolence, and longing desires forthwith to put them into execution.

When she came to the foot of the Mound, she was forced to forsake all her pleasing reveries ; for, looking at her, and waiting for her, she perceived her sister, Lady Maria, and Captain Skipwell.

“ Where on earth have you been,” said they in one breath, “ coming on foot from such an unfashionable direction ?”

“ I have been in the Old Town,” said Lady Amelia, a little embarrassed.

“ Why, so we perceive ; but where, or in what part of the Old Town ?”

Luckily there are many people in this world who ask questions, but expect and wait for no replies. Of this description were Lady Maria and the Captain. Lady Maria loved to talk, and continued.

“Why, I should not be much surprised if she had been in the Cowgate ; that is one way to it, I know.” But this true guess Lady Maria only intended for a sally of wit, and had no notion that her sister’s madness, as she would have termed it, could have gone such lengths.

“Come, we shall question her no further,” said Skipwell ; “I dare say she has had an assignation with the old nabob, Mammon, with whom I saw her flirting at the ball t’other night.”

A supposed assignation was not near so alarming to Lady Amelia, as the disclosure of the real truth ; and her confusion and blushes might have given rise to conjectures, had she not found her face secure from inspection under the friendly shade of her large French bonnet. The contrast between the scene she was now in, and that which she had just left, struck her forcibly. The “How do you do ?” and from well-dressed people, who knew but from hearsay that such a place as the Cowgate existed, the noise of the carriages, and the general vivacity and variety of the scene, in some measure served to dispel the crowd of emotions so recently excited in the breast of Lady Amelia by the abodes of misery.

An elegant barouche came in view. It stopped ; and the Marchioness and Lady Jane, who had so far recovered as to be able to take an airing, beckoned to them to come in. They readily obeyed the sum-

mons ; and Captain Skipwell having handed them in, mounted the dickey beside the coachman, to the great delight of the Marchioness, whose hopes now ran high for one or other of her daughters. Lady Amelia was happily spared all inquiries. She had, like many people, imagined that her concerns were of more importance in the eyes of others than they really were.

How many people are afraid of the world, of whom the world takes no note, or stand in awe of a phantom, which exists but in their own imagination ! Lady Amelia had done an act which would have been considered in her own family as equal in atrocity to her having gone upon the stage. She knew, of course, that the whole irreligious world would be of the same opinion. It therefore appeared of the utmost importance to her to keep it concealed ; and she fell into a fit of musing thereupon in the corner of the barouche, as it whirled over the pavement, unconscious of the various emotions it carried in its bosom.

“ I cannot think I have done wrong,” said Lady Amelia to herself. “ Why am I then in such alarm for detection ? Surely I am placed in a very trying situation ; papa and mamma think so differently from me. Yet, I am twenty-one,—an age when people should be allowed to judge for themselves. I love my father and mother, and it grieves me much to

pain them. Yet, my Bible says, ‘Whoever loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.’ I wish I could live with any person who thought as I do. I wonder if Nabob Mammon would let me do as I choose in these respects?”

This was perhaps the first time that such a thought had entered the head of Lady Amelia; but thoughts that once find entrance into any head or heart, are very apt to return again. “I dare say mamma would be very well pleased if I was to marry Nabob Mammon. He is old and ugly; but, if he is a good man, what does that signify? I am sure I would take good care of him; and if he gave me plenty of money, oh! what good I would do!”

Lady Amelia had yet to learn that money was not the only, or even the best means of doing good. They whom the Saviour chose to be the dispensers of precious gifts to man, said, “Silver and gold have we none, but such things as we have give we unto you.” And, oh! what things were they?—immediate cure of bodily illness, and spiritual maladies, by the word of eternal life.

Lady Amelia’s thoughts may appear foolish to many; but the thoughts of wiser people, I fear, would scarcely admit of being indiscriminately recorded for the inspection of all and sundry. “Thought, busy thought, too busy for the peace of many!” What devices are often fallen on to get rid of it; yet can

we not cease to think, until we cease to be, or are become “like the dull weed that rots on Lethe’s shore!” But carriages, and people, and time, and all things move on ; and the vehicle that contained Lady Amelia and her thoughts, entered the sands of Leith, the common airing of the Marchioness and other ladies of distinction, when they are troubled with vapours, —a complaint of a very serious nature, to which all are liable, who are placed in situations where their daily bread seems provided for them, and who hear no voice in their heart, which says, “Up, and be doing.”

The noise of rattling over the pavement being stopped, Captain Skipwell turned round to communicate the babble of his tongue to the fair ones inside. It would neither be instructive nor entertaining to put it down verbatim ; as, however *spiritual* and charming the effect may be in real life, with all the oh’s, and la’s, and small oaths, and gesture suited to the words, yet, in the sober representation of a printed page, it would appear marvellously dull and vapid.

But, for the instruction of those who are not, from taste or duty, called to mingle in such society, it may be obliging to observe, that young gentlemen in general, of twenty-five years of age, of independent fortune, and consequently plenty in their pockets, with frequently nothing in their heads, in the company of ladies, during the winter season in general, talk of no-

thing but balls and plays, and Nabobs and beauties, and parties and flirtations. In the summer months they talk of aquatic excursions, riding parties, flirting, walks by way of seeing views. In autumn, hunting, shooting, fishing, visits to the country, sometimes to a watering-place. In the fall of the leaf,

“ When the clouds fly different, and the sudden sun,
By fits effulgent, gilds the illumined field ;”

then country balls, hunts, and county meetings, fill their time and their tongues, and bring them gradually back again to the late hours of the winter ; when again the same dull round, called gaiety, fashion, pleasure, commences. To them the “ *varying year*” brings no variety ; and they who are always chasing pleasure, are almost always catching pain. But the lovers of pleasure have their conversation tinctured more or less by the pursuits, nominal or actual, of their profession—whether the army, the navy, the law, or physic.

Skipwell, being a naval man, commenced his talk often with, “ when I was last at sea,” or, “ when I was at the Cape,” or, “ when I was at the ball given by Admiral Bomb,” “ when I acted Ranger on board the *Dooll* ;” or, when he wished to be considered as a literary character, he said, “ I am quite against Captain Frigid’s idea with regard to finding a passage by the

Pole ; there must be one, if they could find it ; and the islands that lie in 29 N. lon., and in 40 S. lat., must lead to other islands, and seas, or lands, or somewhere. What a pity that poor Esquimaux died—what light he would have thrown upon the subject ! Poor fellow ! he died dreaming of his sister and his idols—I wonder none of the Saints of Edinburgh got hold of him,” looking at Lady Amelia.

She raised her eyes, for he had touched upon a subject that raised her humane feelings. “ Poor fellow ! ” said she.

But the Captain had exhausted all he knew on this subject, and concluded the whole with a not inappropriate quotation, which he had learned long ago at school. “ But they must never attempt an expedition of this kind,” said he,

“ When the cheerless empire of the Sky, to Capricorn,
The Centaur, Archer yields, and fierce Aquarius
Stains the inverted year.”

“ Never,” said the Marchioness.—“ Never,” said Ladies Maria and Jane.—“ Never indeed,” said Lady Amelia.

The young fashionable empty-headed lawyer again has his technical story, and his stories and anecdotes often commence with “ when I was on the North Circuit—when I was employed (as a supernumerary) in that cause decided by Lord Doornail ; when

we were all kept in so late, that it was two o'clock before we got to Lady Dark's assembly—What capital balls we had on the West Circuit, two years before ! the whole country happened to be at home that year ; it was kept up with a great deal of spirit, though there were a great many people condemned that year."

But a Laird with an empty head is perhaps the most insufferable of all creatures ; and the conversation of these gentlemen, though far from the spirit of Buffon, seldom ascends beyond the brute creation—horse and hound, hawk and dog, their soul, their conversation, and their time. Indeed what is commonly called conversation, which of course is as common as any common thing, is in general so tiresome and dull, that all unconverted beings, possessed of any soul or spirit, pervert it immediately to relieve the tedium, into the sins of the tongue—scandal, evil speaking, foolish jesting, tart reply.

And the meek gentle Christian, whose taste and feeling, as well as his better principle, forbid his joining in such unpleasant waste of time, feels himself under the necessity of sitting in silence, when unavoidably called to mix with those of whom it may be said, that " God is not in all their thoughts," though his name often, in a very irreverent manner, passes their lips.

To talk and to converse, as has been wisely observed, are two very different things. Conversation, in its highest state, ought to be the medium for interchange of thought. But alas ! amongst worldlings, the deceptions of conversation are all in use ; for who would dare, such as they are, to lay their thoughts naked and open before the eyes of their uncharitable fellow-creatures ? Hence many of the talkings called conversations are words without thought, tainted indeed by the impure fountains from whence they proceed, but by no means fully depicting the corrupt state of what is within.

“ Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few respect or use thee as they ought !
But all shall give account of every wrong,
Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue !
Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,
Or sell their glory at a market price ;
Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon,
The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon.”

But Lady Amelia, though young in the ways and manners of Christians, shuddered when she heard her Maker's name used irreverently in conversation ; and I am sorry to say, that even in the refined society commonly to be met with at the Marquis of Vainall's, her ears were often shocked by the words used by many in the heat of argument and illustration of their favourite opinions. But I shall not pollute my

paper by specimens of what truly well-bred men would be ashamed to utter. In general, they are unconscious what they say, and have such wide definitions of swearing, that heaven and hell, salvation and damnation, the sacred name of Deity, the hated one of the Enemy of mankind—all are used familiarly, lightly, and carelessly ; while still they assert that they do not break the third commandment. Inconsistent beings ! they will yet blindly find fault with religious characters for talking, but how differently, on the same high themes—asserting that they are too sacred for common conversation.—Self-deceivers ! they are too sacred to be talked of seriously, but not too sacred to be used as expletives or interjections, either in the looseness of talk, the heat of argument, or the heat of temper !

“ Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay,” said the great law-giver ; “ for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil ”

But I am digressing from the airing, which continued with little conversation and much talk—“ words followed words—to question answer flowed ;” and concluded not till the airing finished, and they arrived in one of the fashionable streets of Edinburgh, where the Marquis of Vainall at present resided.

Skipwell was off the dickie in a moment, and handed the ladies out with much grace and dexterity.

There was a party, as usual, at dinner ; and amongst other guests, as was expected, Nabob Mammon had a chair. He happened, by accident or design, to be seated by Lady Amelia, to whom he shewed symptoms of continuing attention, as was immediately remarked by the looks, full of quizzing expression, of Captain Skipwell and Ladies Maria and Jane.

Lady Amelia's mind was too highly wrought up by her present self-denying schemes of benevolence, to pay much attention to looks or inuendos ; and if she did not actually encourage the Nabob's attentions, she had certainly no appearance of repelling them. Nabob Mammon had been twenty-five years on the Madras establishment—was reported to have made £400,000—and was actually possessed of the half of it. He was therefore esteemed, in the circles of Edinburgh, a capital match. He was a neat, little, yellow-faced man, with a cheerful facetious countenance ; and some people declared, that he was by no means so old as he appeared to be, and that a summer at Cheltenham, where all bilious people ought certainly to repair, would take twenty years off his present appearance.

To do him justice, he would by no means have thought of marrying so young a woman as Lady Amelia ; but he had already made some unsuccessful attempts on those of riper years, and he was determined to be married, being a benevolent, sociable,

affectionate gentleman ;—in short, of that amiable description of natural characters which must have something to love, and something to be kind to. He had already arranged, in his little benevolent heart, the many trinkets and *bijoux* his lady was to possess. Who the happy fair one was to be, he had no precise idea, for he was not in love, but had a general liking to all pleasing good-looking young women. But his fate seemed drawing near a crisis, and his affections veering towards a settled point.

She was to be nineteen, and tall, and handsome, and plump, and she was to have an air of thought and sweetness ; the narrow line between thought and melancholy, which he could not describe, though he felt the full charm of the effect.

However, his reflections were not so totally overwhelming and indescribable, but he found himself able to be agreeable.

“ What excellent curry you have always in this house, my lord,” said he.

“ I must own it is very good,” said the Marquis ;
“ I do think our cook understands it.”

But, before the Nabob had emptied his plate of this excellent dish, his thoughts had returned to the lady ; and the result was, that he cared not whether she was tall or short, young or old ; she was to be no other than Lady Amelia Truefeel, and he determined, in due form, to make his proposals to her ladyship.

CHAPTER XI.

“ In misery’s darkest caverns known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless Anguish pour’d his groan,
And lonely Want retired to die.”

To feel strongly assured that we are in the right, must necessarily lead to the deduction that those whose opinions are diametrically opposite are in the wrong.

Every sincere believer will be anxious that others will hold the same faith, in unity of spirit.

But many who are themselves but seeking the way to Sion, are too confident that they have already found it, and in an amiable though mistaken zeal, endeavour to engraft upon others their own newly-formed opinions, which they afterwards find to have been erroneous. Lady Amelia’s affection towards her own kindred was by no means so lukewarm as to admit of her remaining silent, when opportunity occurred to exhort her sisters to seek the way to heaven, by considering the cause of the poor.

“ Oh !” said she, “ let us not restrain the feelings of compassion which God has implanted in our hearts. What a tale of misery Dressall told me this morn-

ing ! My money is all spent, but I know you will both give me some when I tell you the story."

" I wonder you can hope any such thing, when you know how poor I am," said Lady Jane ; " I wish I may even have enough to pay Tastyflower's bill ; and I don't believe I shall be able to afford a set of pearls till I am married. By the by, when you marry Nabob Mammon, you will have the generosity to give me one."

Lady Amelia at this last sally looked a little grave ; for, whenever a case of charity was mentioned, and her purse was low, passing thoughts of the Nabob floated more than once through her mind ; but she made the usual reply of all young ladies to jokes of this kind,—“ Don't talk nonsense."

" Maria, I know you will give me something," said she.

" What ! would you have me disobey mamma ?" said Lady Maria ; " you know she pointedly disapproves of that way of our spending money. Sarah Bell really seems to have turned your head ; I am really sick of her very name."

" You are mistaken, dear Maria, I have not seen nor given anything to Sarah for a long time. It is a family about which I was informed yesterday ; Dressall knows them ; and oh ! what a scene she described to me ! I have not been able to get it out of my head ever since.—You like to weep at trage-

dies, Maria ; there you may see one in real life—a man speechless with palsy—a woman dying of a consumption—three helpless children—rent unpaid, and all earthly resources shut up.”

“ Dear Amelia, don’t plague me with any more dismal stories,” said Lady Maria, “ I really have but one pound left, and with my concert ticket this evening, and my chair hire, I shall be poor enough before to-morrow. I shall give you something for charity next quarter, perhaps.”

“ Next quarter ? ” said Lady Amelia ; “ the man will be dead, long before that ; who can tell how soon we may all die ? and that man will be a Lazarus to witness against us, if we do not relieve him.”

“ ’Tis impossible,” said both sisters, “ to give you anything when we are so poor ourselves—you must just try to get Nabob Mammon, to put an end to all your difficulties.”

Lady Amelia again looked grave, and several new ideas arose.

“ Would it be proper for me to beg for them from Nabob Mammon ? ” thought Lady Amelia ; but a feeling she could scarcely define made the thought vanish ; and the good she thought she could do with money—the misery she might relieve—the happiness she might diffuse, manifested itself to her imagination in a tenfold degree.

“ How shall I be able to raise a little money ? I

shall sell my pearl necklace ; paste will look quite as well."

The thought was no sooner conceived than she hastened to put it in execution.

" Well, Jane," said she, " I know you want a pearl necklace, will you buy mine from me ? It cost twenty pounds ; you shall have it for ten."

" That is not a bad bargain for me, after all," said Lady Jane. " Done ; and you shall have my last winter's pelisse into the bargain."—She went to her desk and produced the money.

" Ah, Jane, come with me for once, and assist me with your advice how to relieve them."

Lady Jane burst into a fit of laughter.—" Do you really imagine," said she, " that I would accompany you on any such mad scheme ?"

" We are commanded to visit the poor, how can we hope for heaven, if we neglect to obey God's commandments. Oh ! my dear sisters, you can't think how it grieves me to think you are so averse to the religion of Jesus ; the bitter thought that we shall be separated in eternity, is sometimes like to break my heart."

" Pooh," said Lady Maria, " what prosing ; I wish you may never have more to distress you ; we'll be as well off in eternity as you."

" God grant you may," said Lady Amelia, with a heartfelt sigh.

“ Well, to please you, I shall give them my night-cloak, to help to cover them,” said Lady Maria.

Dressall was ordered to bring the articles in question, viz. the old cloak, pelisse, and pearl necklace, and they were accordingly laid upon the sofa, when the Marchioness unexpectedly entered the room.

“ What are you all about ?” said she ; “ pearl necklaces, cloaks, pelisses, at this hour of the day !”

“ We have been making bargains, mamma,” said Lady Maria. “ Amelia has sold her necklace to Jane for ten pounds, and she gives her old pelisse, and I add my cloak, into the bargain.”

The Marchioness quickly comprehended how the matter stood, but insisted upon hearing the whole particulars in a voice which admitted of no delay, and whose tones at once intimidated Ladies Jane and Amelia. But her favourite and privileged daughter, Lady Maria, took upon her to reply, and in a few words related Lady Amelia’s conversation, and the selling of the necklace.

“ What right, pray,” said the Marchioness, reddening,—“ what right, I say, had she to sell, even to her sister, my gift ? Is that filial affection ? Is that filial respect ? And the money to be bestowed for such a purpose too ! Such conduct cannot be borne, and I will submit to such doings in my house no longer.”

The Marchioness continued in such a strain of invective, as never failed of making the field her own.

She cancelled the bargain, and exacted a promise from Amelia, that she was to keep her necklace and her opinions to herself, and, upon no account whatever, beg from her sisters or any of the family. The lecture was interspersed with various little inuendos and reflections, but concluded upon agreeing to receive her into favour upon strict obedience to these, and all other laws, enacted by the sovereign will of the Marchioness.

Amelia felt this deeply ; her hopes from the pearl necklace were annihilated ; she almost hated the sight of it, as it was fastened round her neck at dinner.

Desires of money thus prevailing, the image of Nabob Mammon grew familiar to her, and the jokes of her sisters and Captain Skipwell upon this point were not so perfectly ridiculous as at first to her mind's eye.

“ Were it my lot to be his wife, freedom and riches would be at my command. I could surely relieve half the poor in Edinburgh at least.” Yet the thoughts of the distress Dressall had painted to her was distracting, while her hand seemed thus tied up from relieving them.

“ They cannot starve—I must go and beg for them. Miss Careless will give me a few shillings, and so will Mrs Friendly ; and Lady Maria Murphy never refuses anybody. That easy good nature is a quality I admire very much, after all.” And plan-

ning various devices for raising a little money, she set out on her visits with more alacrity than usual, having an object in view.

The family who had thus excited her emotions were, indeed, well calculated to draw forth the benevolent feelings of the heart. Unlike Sarah Bell in all respects, misfortune had visited them, unaccompanied by its usual attendant vice.

John Simpson had been a respectable grocer, in a town of some consideration in the west of Scotland. His wife was an active woman ; they had three fine children ; and for some years enjoyed as much happiness as contentment, industry, and the exercise of the moral virtues, are calculated to bestow. He was honourable and unsuspecting, and in an evil hour he became cautioner for a friend in trade. He looked forward to no evil, and the cup of his prosperity was full, when the post announced to him the fatal intelligence of the failure of his friend, and the consequent loss of all his little savings, and involment for debts he had no prospect of ever clearing. The depressed state of trade, and the misery of all the lower orders, was at this time so general, that any one individual was not likely to be relieved to any extent, either by public or private benevolence. The shop was sold ; John and his wife toiled night and day—she with her needle, and he seeking employment as an under shopkeeper. But John, unaccustomed to these ex-

ertions, and grief preying upon his mind, was attacked with a paralytic stroke, which reduced him to the brink of the grave, and Mrs Simpson found all her efforts ineffectual to pay for physicians and to maintain her family. Misfortune never comes single ; or rather, one unfortunate event brings on another. Her own health began to give way, the children also became sickly, unused to their numerous privations. The pride of independence was now nearly subdued ; she applied to the charitable, but her case was a common one ; applications were innumerable at this period, and she received but scanty supplies. Many were the schemes that occurred to them for bettering their condition. When things appear to be at the worst, a change of place is sometimes resorted to, as likely to produce a change of fortune.

Mrs Simpson recollected with hope Mrs Freeheart, a lady in Edinburgh whom she had served as lady's-maid before her marriage.

“Ah ! these were blessed days,” thought she, “when I had all my own wants supplied, and was often sent by her to minister to those of others.”

John's disease gave way to youth and a naturally good constitution ; he was again able to walk, though quite unfit for active exertion. His pride was almost subdued, at least so far as to enable him to go and solicit his friends for a little supply to carry himself and family to Edinburgh. Glad at the prospect of

diminishing the number of their dependants, they furnished a small sum ; and bidding adieu, not without emotion, to the place where they had known so many happy days, he, with his family, set off in the carrier's cart on a bleak morning in spring, with some vague uncertain hopes, that in a great town employment would surely be found for a man willing to do anything ; besides the certainty of his wife becoming a pensioner of her former mistress.

'Tis astonishing what feeble reeds are laid hold upon by those sinking into a state of dependance, whose resources are exhausted, whose hearts are enfeebled by sorrow, whose minds have attained a tone which none but the children of misfortune can conceive.

The sorrows and distresses of such people as John Simpson and his family are of too homely, too common and unromantic a nature, to draw forth the sympathy and tears of the gentry. Why are those alone in exalted situations to be sympathized with, while the poor ones of the earth are supposed to be able to bear their sorrows without complaining ? Grief is the same in the heart of the monarch as in the bosom of the peasant. How much has been said, how much has been written, on the misfortunes of the great ? Is it the pride of human nature that must have sorrow clothed with magnificence and high birth, to call forth its tears ?

When the young, the lovely Queen Mary, left Paris, the land of delight, the seat of pleasure, to go to the barren hills of Scotland, where at least plenty awaited her, every heart felt for her, and hearts still sorrow for her sorrow.

Yet the poor Simpsons, who had once known affluence, who had all the feelings, all the weaknesses of human nature,—who had been bereaved of all their worldly wealth, who had to beg a scanty pittance to enable them to remove from one abode of misery to another, had they had five guineas in their pocket, would have found very few to sympathize with their feelings on leaving their little garden, their romantic hill—in short, their home, with all its pleasures, all its remembrances, all its associations. They cast a longing lingering look as the cart turned the corner, where the hill obscured the last possible glimpse of the smoke near their dwelling; and after a tedious, cold, and painful journey, conducted with the utmost economy, the sick man, the worn-out wife, and helpless children, arrived at a comfortless dwelling in the Grass-market, which they paid for per advance before they could be admitted. They found themselves in an ill-aired garret, with a fortune amounting to five shillings.

The landlady, though poor herself, and accustomed to such lodgers, was moved by the emaciated appearance of the party; she did everything in her

power to make them comfortable, and, with one of their shillings, went to provide them with some food. Poor Simpson was quite worn out ; he cast a despairing look upon his family, then lay down on the miserable bed and fell asleep.

The children felt the confinement severely, and made various attempts to wander down to the street. At last their mother got them engaged in unpacking their remaining articles ; and then fatigue, and that blessed medicine sleep, gave a temporary intermission to thought and anxiety.

The next morning, Mrs Simpson dressed herself in her few remaining clothes, and endeavoured to recal the appearance of her former station ; and, having borrowed the landlady's cloak to cover all defects, and committed the children to her care till she should return, she proceeded to Prince's Street, where her former charitable mistress, Mrs Frecheart, resided. A chill came over her as she drew near the door, and tears came into her eyes. Her heart was full as she gave a humble knock at that door, which she had been formerly accustomed to open freely. A strange domestic, in deep mourning, opened the door, and, with the air which too many servants use to their equals in birth, though inferiors in fortune—in short, with no very gracious aspect, asked her business.

“ Will you tell your lady that her old servant Margaret Ready wishes to speak with her ? ”

“ There is no lady lives here,” replied the man.

“ What ! is not this Mrs Freeheart’s house ? ” said Mrs Simpson.

“ Mrs Freeheart,” said the man, “ died three weeks ago, and the family are all gone to England.”

He shut the door without further preamble in the face of the overwhelmed Margaret Simpson.

“ And is she gone ! ” said she to herself, as she silently withdrew from the door, “ gone to her rest, little thinking how many live bitterly to deplore her loss ! What would I have given to have seen her sweet face once more—she had aye a pleasant word to speak to the friendless ! She had aye pity to give to the sorrowful ! Where now shall a wretch like me turn for relief ?—Before I left this town I was well acquainted with Betty Dressall, the ladies’ maid at the Marquis of Vainall’s. Yet, she may be dead too—this is a weary world ! ”

The day was cold, and Mrs Simpson had been little accustomed to go about since her marriage. She found herself much oppressed with the cold, and the exertions of the previous day, and felt far from well. When she reached the Marquis’s door, it was getting late, and one of the foggy dews of Edinburgh was coming on.

The servant told her to wait a little, and he would tell Dressall to speak to her whenever she came from the ladies, who had gone to dress for dinner. She waited nearly half an hour, shivering with cold, till Dressall was at liberty, who flew down to meet her, and recognized with much sorrow her old acquaintance, so sadly changed ; and heard, with great commiseration, the tale of her having gone so far back in the world. She gave her all the money she had saved from her wages, amounting to half-a-guinea, and promised to speak in her behalf to her young mistress.

The next was a gay week, and Dressall had much to do ; eight days elapsed before she had it in her power to visit the garret of the Simpsons. She found them in a state which drew forth all her feelings. Mrs Simpson had caught a severe inflammatory cold, and was confined to her miserable bed, while the neglected children, instigated by the counsel and example of their neighbours, had begun the trade of begging. The miserable father, worn out by grief and vexation, had another paralytic attack ; and now almost insensible to his misfortunes, lay down and submitted to his fate.

Such was the real state of the Simpsons, when their case was made known to Lady Amelia, and, her heart not yet hardened by meeting with guilty impostors, who forged tales of feigned misfortune, she

felt, in a most painful degree, all the tantalizing desires of doing good, without the power of putting them in execution.

The landlady with whom the Simpsons lodged soon discovered that her lodgers had not been accustomed to, and did not understand, the art of begging. She therefore, in their name, begged from some well-known charitable characters, and out of the sums collected, paid herself for the lodging, and gave them the overplus.

In a town like Edinburgh, where, blessed be God, there are many sincere, active, benevolent Christians, the tale of the Simpsons became known, though, owing to the number of impostors, their tale was not entirely credited, nor their distress completely relieved.

How hard to think, that the poor themselves are the means of hardening the rich ! What a dreadful account will they have to render to the Judge of all the earth on the great day ! To Him who is no respecter of persons—who judges impartially rich and poor !

The Simpsons were strangers, who lodged in a garret where many a cheat had lodged, and been before detected. Their children had been introduced to the notice of the public as street beggars. They were entitled to no relief from any public charity—all things were against them. Yet one Samaritan, who thought no evil, who believed all things, had

discovered them, and came in person to speak comfort to them. 'Twas Miss Jane Beaumont, whose bounty was large, and whose soul was sincere, but whose fortune was very limited.

“ Alas !” said she, “ if their story is true, what can I do for them without money ?” But she was not one of those who, because she could not do much, would not do anything. She sent them some strengthening jellies and some cordials. She read to them, cheered them, and bid them be of good comfort, promising to speak in their behalf to some whose purses were better plenished than her own.

In one of her visits to them, as she ascended the stair, she heard a voice, which, in no vulgar accents, was soothing the poor sufferers—'twas a stranger of a most benevolent aspect ; his purse was in his hand.

“ Yes,” said he, “ you must all return to your former habitation ; your health will there be restored. I'll take your shop, and stock it for you—all will go well. Cheer up ; when you get rich, you will repay me.” And he proceeded, amidst the blessings of the family, to set down on paper the necessary directions for putting this plan in execution.

When Miss Beaumont entered, she recognized him as a benevolent being whose name she had not been able to learn, but whose good deeds were so numerous, they could not be concealed. He seemed to know her name and character. “ Madam,” said he,

“ I am a stranger—I am ignorant of this town, and of its ways—I am anxious to do good, yet am often at a loss how to put my plans in execution. Here is my purse, in which you will find sufficient for the plan I have suggested for this family. Do you use it for their benefit ; and may the Inspirer of every good thought bless and prosper all your efforts !”

So saying, amidst the blessings of the overjoyed Simpsons, he left the house. But alas ! the relief came too late—poor Simpson’s complaint refused to yield to care and medical aid ; his wife also was beyond the reach of human succour.

Miss Beaumont got them removed to airy, comfortable lodgings. It was all too late ; yet, all that human aid could do, was done to gladden their closing day. The promises of the gospel consoled their last moments, and they died within a few days of each other, in the strong assurance of a joyful meeting beyond the grave, through the merits of an all-sufficient Saviour.

The money of the benevolent unknown was used for the benefit of the orphans ; they were sent to the care of an aunt, who was thus enabled to provide for and educate them.

Lady Amelia’s perplexities were thus ended with regard to the Simpsons, and she was one of those who contributed to sooth their last moments. She was one of those who united in blessing the benevo-

lent stranger, and whose curiosity was excited by the accounts she heard of him from all the unfortunate, to know who he was, and what was his name.

But all such inquiries had hitherto proved ineffectual.

CHAPTER XII.

THE Nabob continued his visits at the Marquis of Vainall's, and the family their jokes, when he happened, by accident or design, to pay any attention to Lady Amelia.

One morning, breakfast was later than usual ; Mrs Pelham had so many appointments with milliners and dress-makers, that she had scarcely time to take her food ; for all these important concerns she considered it her absolute duty to superintend herself.

“ By attention to giving particular orders to your dress-maker at first,” said she, “ the comfort you feel in your dress is greatly increased ; and it is worthwhile to give one's self a little trouble for a matter, which, if properly attended to, may be a source of pleasing and rational satisfaction for months, nay, if the fashion does not change rapidly, perhaps for years.”

“ True, ma'am,” said Lady Amelia ; “ but I consider such concerns more as the department of my maid.”

“ Your maid ?” retorted Mrs Pelham ; “ there are few maids fit to be trusted to that extent, I assure

you. Do you think my China crape, for instance, could have been trimmed and done up in the manner it now is, had I not given most particular attention to it myself? If you would allow me to give you a bit of advice, my dear Lady Amelia, never trust anything that is important but to one who has a personal interest in it. Your gowns, I assure you, would have a very different aspect, if you but gave a little attention to that subject yourself. But if you will go with me to my chamber, I will shew you how I proceed in my directions to my maid."

"You are very kind," answered Lady Amelia; "but I have other occupations this forenoon, which must prevent my profiting by your instructions."

They were interrupted by the Marchioness, coming in to shew Mrs Pelham some French lace, which had been smuggled, and which, it was said, might be obtained at a very cheap rate.

The lace was tempting; the man was asked in, and veils and dresses were purchased by these moral characters without scruple, and in open defiance of the Saviour's precept, of "rendering unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's."

In the midst of this business, Captain Skipwell entered; he seemed a little embarrassed in his manner, and looked as if he had some important secret to unfold. He begged an audience of the Marquis; and while the servant was delivering the message, Na-

bob Mammon also arrived, looking very important and very facetious. He had come by appointment to have an interview with the Marquis, and accordingly walked into his study, while Skipwell was obliged to delay his interview, and flirt in the interim with the ladies. But his spirits seemed forced, and his manner was absent.

The Marquis had communicated to the Marchioness the hint the Nabob had given him the preceding evening, and she being of a sanguine disposition, concluded that it was not improbable that a similar object had prompted Captain Skipwell to solicit a private audience.

On the important, though common occurrence, of courtship and marriage, there are various ways of proceeding, and the peculiar character of a man appears in this, as in every other action of his life.

That marriages and all events are under the superintendence of Heaven, a Christian cannot doubt. "A man's heart deviseth his ways, but the Lord directeth his steps." Yet the characters of men are often legibly inscribed on the means they employ to compass their ends. Your deliberate characters delay and wait, and weigh and consider, till the time passes away when the fair one might have been propitious. They seem to act as if this connexion was to last an eternity; remembering not that the time

will soon arrive, "when they that have wives will be as though they had none."

On the other hand, your precipitate characters, with unbecoming lightness, choose a partner for life with as little consideration as a partner for a dance; and from too much hurry, mar what it is not permitted to mend.

Of this latter description, was Captain Skipwell. Yet he had an instinct, which, upon the whole, would have led him to choose an amiable helpmate.

The Nabob's proposals were viewed by the Marquis as he could have wished, and he departed, full of hope, and with full permission to pay his addresses to Lady Amelia.

The Captain was next ushered in; when, much to the Marquis's surprise, and somewhat to his disappointment, he made his proposals also for the same lady. The Marquis gave the same reply,—“Whoever has her consent has mine;” and Skipwell also departed, full of hope, and with few fears of being rivalled by Nabob Mammon.

Lady Amelia was immediately apprized of what had passed. She was much astonished at her conquest of Skipwell. The Nabob had not appeared so improbable to her.

“You may take which you please, my dear,” said her father; “I do not hurry you; they are both

rich, and they are both good fellows. If you don't like an old man, you can take a young one; and if you don't like the young, you can take the old one: 'tis the same to me, I assure you, my dear. I never shall control you;—your choice is mine."

Lady Amelia perceived that her marrying one of them was taken for granted, and supposed to be a matter of course: and as she had not learned to dispute matters of course, she began to reflect seriously on the choice to which duty might seem to point.

She had no particular love for either of them; and the Nabob appeared to her the man most likely to enter into her schemes—the man most likely to be passive, if not an accomplice, and therefore the man it was her duty to select. But, like other wise people, she took a night to sleep upon it, and she almost prayed in her heart for the counsel of Heaven.

But this she would scarcely have owned; for she thought all lesser concerns were beneath the dignity of her heavenly Father's superintendence, and would have deemed such a hope presumptuous. "We are the artizans of our own lot," was the sentiment she was accustomed to hear, and had not yet learned to doubt. And though she often read in her Bible, that "not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our heavenly Father," and that "the hairs of our head are all numbered;" these, and many other assuran-

ces to the same effect, she had not learned to apply to herself.

Yet, as an earthly parent watches over a child, and keeps it from dangers it sees not, so our heavenly Father watches over his own, even before their minds are aware of his constant care ; when they see him not with the eye of faith, though he is continually nigh them.

There were no mysterious persons in the family ; and if there were no real delicacies, there were also no false ones, substituted for the reality ; and all things were discussed publicly or privately *par hazard*.

The Marchioness felt as if she had been overreached by the contingency of both personages having fixed their affections on the same daughter ; but yet she was thankful that Amelia was the chosen fair, as, from the visible perversion of her principles, it was of her establishment alone that she had any doubts. She gave her vote in favour of Skipwell ; though like her husband, as it was her daughter that was to be married, and not herself, it was but reasonable that she should have her choice.

Dr Pelham rather favoured the Nabob ; but Mrs Pelham and the young ladies were clearly in favour of Skipwell.

The Marchioness said, she had no doubt the Na-

bob was a very good man ; that she understood he had settled a pension upon his old aunt, who had brought him up. “ That is very good of him indeed,” said the Marquis, “ and will go a great way with Amelia, I should think.”

“ I’m not so sure of that,” replied the Marchioness ; “ she seems very cool upon that noble trait in the character of Dr Purdie, that I’m sure you must have heard. Did I tell it to you ?” turning to Mrs Pelham.

“ No,” said Mrs Pelham, who, fortunately for the Marchioness, never recollected anything she heard, except on the subject of dress.

“ Then I shall tell it to you, for it ought to be told to his honour. Do you know he makes a point every day, whether good or bad, to sit an hour and read the newspapers to Lord John Puff, from the time he had a paralytic stroke ; and, to my certain knowledge, he gave twenty pounds out of his own pocket, to the reduced family of the Handtomouths. These are practical acts of charity, which every one must admire, and few, alas, perform !”

“ Few, indeed,” said Dr Pelham.

The family in general of the Marquis of Vainall were a little tired of the benevolence of Dr Purdie, for it seemed to have made such an impression on the Marchioness’s mind, that the words benevolence, generosity, or charity, could never be mentioned,

without calling forth an eulogium upon Dr Furdie, and the relation of the afore-mentioned traits.

“ If Nabob Mammon possesses as much benevolence as Dr Purdie, I think he may even do for Lady Amelia,” said Dr Pelham.

Lady Amelia's thoughts had settled themselves into a decided preference for the Nabob. Accordingly she was rather perplexed to find the majority in favour of Skipwell. She wished to have pleased all, which is natural to all amiable tempers ; but this she found by experience to be impossible. Her good sense, however, got the better of her good nature, and pointed out the expediency of pleasing herself in a matter of this importance. Her decision was accordingly formed, and soon made known to her father ; and thence, in its natural course, communicated to the parties in question.

They were all surprised—the Nabob flattered, yet astnoished, that his yellow countenance could have cut out the blooming Skipwell ; and Skipwell, without having more than usual conceit, could scarcely recover his surprise, not at being refused by Lady Amelia, but at being refused for the sake of Nabob Mammon. He had too much philosophy or lightness of heart, and too little love, to allow any transaction of this nature to prey upon his mind ; he therefore consoled himself with the idea, that about twenty years afterwards, when he had made the tour of the

West Indies, he might be deemed more worthy to carry off the heart of a young lady.

The whole appeared like a dream to Lady Amelia. The courtship, declaration, and acceptance, all had followed so rapidly, she could scarcely collect her ideas, and the Nabob could hardly believe that he was actually her accepted lover.

Settlements prevented the marriage day being fixed, and Lady Amelia continued to shower favours upon Sarah Bell, and upon others, whom the fame of her generosity collected within her orbit.

Of the Nabob's religious sentiments she knew but little, and he took as little note of hers.

Dr Pelham continued to deal out invectives against Methodists in general, as opportunity occurred; in which Nabob Mammon, with his usual good humour, heartily concurred.

These discussions sometimes threw the bride elect into thoughtful musings, but which always concluded with, "What's done, cannot be undone."

The Nabob was a great addition to Dr Pelham's evening rubber, while Lady Amelia sat apart, absorbed in her own reflections.

"I'm lucky—very lucky," said Lady Amelia's lover, shewing the honours to the Marquis, who was his partner. "I'm lucky in a partner for all things," said he, looking to Lady Amelia.

“Is that yours, Dr Pelham?” said the Marchioness to her partner, who sat wrapt in thought, with looks intent on deep design, which his hand prepared to put in execution. “Out with it—let us rush on our fate,” said the Marchioness.

Dr Pelham, with a deep groan, pulled out the card.

“We are really two unfortunate beings,” said he: “’tis in vain to look to your ladyship for any support; and yet never man had a fairer show of cards than I had.”

“We had five cards, my lord, and two honours—six and three are nine, and one is ten; that is the rubber,” said the facetious Nabob, rubbing his hands, and chuckling with delight.

“Our game was a double, a single, and the rubber; but come, we shall have our revenge,” said Dr. Pelham, rallying from his disappointment; and as he shuffled the cards, something more than yea and nay escaped from his lips.

“Ought a Christian Pastor ever to talk of revenge,” thought Lady Amelia, who was now beginning to have her doubts, if being in orders necessarily implied being a Christian. Much hilarity and card *bon mots* succeeded while the cards were dealing; and Lady Amelia retired into the adjoining room, where her sisters were waltzing with Mrs Pelham, who, not

from want of inclination, but from want of brains, never played at cards.

Nabob Mammon, like most men, had principles and ideas of his own on which he acted. He had likewise some standards upon which all female perfection was formed; they were taken very much from his recollection of his mother before he went to India, and of his aunt, once the beautiful Miss Betty Mammon, and now his pensioner, the ancient Miss Elizabeth Mammon, the trumpeter of his praises and perfections, at all select tea-tables in — Square, in Edinburgh.

The Nabob was very good-tempered; at the same time as obstinate as a mule. When once an idea took possession of his brain, it might be said to take root in the thickest part of his head.

One of his maxims was, that all young women were like wax, and might be moulded to any form a man liked. When past middle age, he then deemed them as unmanageable as the Castle rock, or his aunt Elizabeth.

In one of his conversations with Lady Amelia, he recurred to the agreeable theme of her having accepted him; hoping to hear, that, like Desdemona, she had loved him for the dangers he had passed, or some such interesting reason. But his countenance became a little grave, when she said, that the scale pre-

ponderated in his favour, from hearing of his benevolence, and seeing the urbanity of his manners, which made her conclude that he would encourage and patronize all her schemes for charity, and giving relief to the wants of her fellow-creatures. Warmed by her subject, she entered into a detail of all her plans, with an openness that felt sure of having met with one who would approve of her views. She talked with a firmness and a warmth which shewed she was not the bit of wax the Nabob had supposed ; and he felt assured that some young women could feel, and some could think for themselves ; and that Lady Amelia was one of them.

“ Why, you don’t marry me,” said he, in a tone of disappointment, and fearful of an answer in the affirmative,—“ why, you don’t marry me to squander a few shillings or pounds, or even hundreds, upon beggars ?”

“ No,” said Lady Amelia ; “ not entirely ; though I hope we shall go hand in hand in these views.”

An indescribable foreboding came over her ; she hesitatingly continued, “ To be honest with you, dear sir, I find difficulties and opposition here, which will, I hope, be removed with you.”

The Nabob’s countenance continued to lengthen. The many obscure hints of Dr Pelham now assumed a palpable form to his imagination.

“ Of what nature are your difficulties, my dear ?”

said he. " You seem to have all that a woman can desire in your present situation ?"

Lady Amelia laid open all her heart to him. She described her scruples of conscience, and her contending duties ; and, having sworn him to secrecy, she even confided to him her having visited Mrs Bell, in Little Wark's close.

The Nabob's first idea was that she was mad, or else that he had actually met with a Methodist. He became grave and more grave ; he was an honest man, and felt all the prejudices of stern moralists against the active benevolence of evangelical Christians. Lady Amelia was now rooted out of his heart, and transplanted into his head, where she appeared as a wild girl ; if not absolutely mad, very near it ; capable of clandestinely visiting the Cowgate ; and whose sentiments bordered, if not absolutely partook of that Methodism he had been taught to abhor from his childhood, and from which his aunt Betty still piqued herself on steering clear. He saw in imagination those pagodas, those thousands he had amassed under Golconda's burning suns, squandered by the dregs of the people in gin-shops. He saw his wife an actual Methodist ; and instead of a bride, covered with jewels, and driving in his chariot to the ball or theatre, he saw her, in prophetic vision, walking, in a plain bonnet and brown gown, in the West Port or Cowgate. He could scarce conceal his horror ; he awoke from

his dream, and expressed his sentiments honestly to Lady Amelia, who likewise as honestly declared hers.

The conversation ended, as might be expected, in a mutual release from their engagement; and the Nabob generously promised to do all in his power to soften matters to the Marquis.

Lady Amelia was almost happy; she experienced all the pleasing feelings of having made a sacrifice to her benevolence, with some of its pain;—like a martyr, who, having been led to the stake, sees the flames expire of themselves.

There was, of course, a good deal of fracas in the family. The Marchioness, in particular, was much disappointed. She had begun her shopping for the marriage paraphernalia; it put her out of her way, and affected her temper. For a week or two she looked as if she was a machine of fire, and the ground strewed with gunpowder; for wherever she moved, she found something to raise her irritability. Much was said by her to Lady Amelia.

The Marquis also exerted himself to be severe; and poor Lady Amelia felt all the pain of displeasing those she was by nature bound to honour.

She had not yet learned to know how unavoidably it follows, that “those who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution” from all of contrary opinions.

Things at length resumed their ordinary tenor; the

Nabob was off' past recal ; many of the family then found out he was too old for Lady Amelia.

He returned, two months after, with a young bride, who married him for his diamonds, and the consequent grandeur expected from his fortune. She ate off' plate, slept in state, and gave her charity into the plate at the door of Dr Sweetly's church.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ Or shall the wants of famish’d ravens cry,
And move thy mercy to a quick supply ;
Or shall the silent suits of drooping flowers
Woo thee for drops, and be refresh’d with showers ? ”

“ OH ! mother,” said little Patty Mowbray to her bed-ridden parent, “ do not bid me leave you to-day ; let me stay and read to you ; you canna read yourself to-day.”

The mother lifted up her eyes, and drew aside the curtain.

“ My dear,” said she, “ I grudge your wanting your breakfast ; and there’s naething in the house, but a wee drop milk.”

“ Oh ! mother, I’m no hungry,” said Patty ; “ a little water will do for me, with God’s blessing, till the visitors come with our weekly allowance from the box, and then I’ll go out for potatoes, and for an egg for your dinner.”

“ Weel, my dear, ye may stay ; sit down, and say your prayers.”

Little Patty knelt by the bed of her mother, and

a tear came over her cheek, as she prayed, " Give us this day our daily bread."

She arose, and began to clean the house ; it was poor, but no lady would have shuddered to sit upon the chair. The window was small, but Patty cleaned it every day ; and when there was light, there were no particles of dust to impede its entrance.

There were curtains to the bed ; and there was a cup-board, and some tea-cups, plates, and spoons ; and this dwelling was in Little Wark's Close, not very far from Sarah Bell's. But, oh ! how different were the inhabitants ; the one " still in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity ;" the other taught of God, and led by his spirit.

Mrs Mowbray at present received three shillings a-week, for herself and daughter, from a society to which she had once contributed ; and upon this supply they lived contented, nay, sometimes had a little to spare, to those whose sin and extravagance, more than their misfortune, brought them nearly to starvation. But this day some unforeseen circumstances brought them nearly to their last penny.

The child usually went to a lady, whom Mrs Mowbray had formerly known, to be taught to read and to sew, in the morning ; and there she got her breakfast. But her mother had been very ill during the night, and the affectionate child could not bear the thought of leaving her. Many a wistful look

Patty cast towards the door, in hopes of the visitors' arrival with their supply. "I wish, mother, I was able to finish the stockings Mrs Kindly gave me to knit; I would take them home to her, and then I would get my own money."

But her mother was much exhausted, and scarcely able to answer her. When Patty looked into the bed, and saw her mother's pale face, she began to weep.

"Oh!" said she to herself, "what the neighbours say is very true; she'll not be long for this world." A tap was heard at the door; she ran joyfully to open it, in hopes it was the visitors; but, to her disappointment, Sarah Bell entered.

"Waes me!" said she, "is Mrs Mowbray nae better? Preserve us! how white she looks."

At the sound of a stranger's voice, Mrs Mowbray opened her eyes; but she was by no means cheered by the sight of Sarah, whose character was well known to her.

"How's a' wi' ye the day?" said Sarah; "I just came in to speer for ye. I've missed you up and down the close this while past."

"God has been merciful to me," said Mrs Mowbray; "my pains are much abated, but my strength is weakening. If it is the Lord's pleasure to take me away, God grant that I may be found in Christ."

"Ye was aye a weel-doing woman," said Sarah Bell; "I darsay there's no fear o' your soul."

“ There is none if I am in Christ. Will you sit down, Mrs Bell ?”

“ Indeed, I am rather in a hurry ; I cam to speer for ye, and see if ye wad favour me wi’ the lend o’ ae shilling, for I’m clean out o’ a’ thing the now, and it’ll be twa days before I get the town’s-money, but then I’ll be sure to pay ye ; ye may depend upon it.”

“ Ye never could have applied at a worse time ; for we have neither money nor meat o’ ony kind in the house, and Patty has nae broke her fast the day.”

“ She’s young and stout ; why do ye no send her out to seek her meat ?”

“ God grant a bairn o’ mine may never take to such ways,” said Mrs Mowbray, with solemn earnestness.

“ As gude folk’s bairns as you have done it afore,” said Mrs Bell, drawing back her head.

“ God be praised,” said Mrs Mowbray, “ the day has never yet passed that we hae wanted bread, and I’ll trust in Him yet.”

“ Ye’re weel aff by mony,” said Sarah, with an envious look ; “ lying on a wise-like bed, wi’ bein curtains round you ; ye can never be sair put to it, as lang as ye can get them pawned.”

“ I passed my word to Mrs Poorbefriend, not to part wi’ them ; and I’ll be ill aff indeed before I try that. If times dinna grow better wi’ us, when it’s the Lord’s pleasure to take me to himsell, Patty must

sell them, to pay my burial. It's aye right to be free frae man when we can."

"I'm no just sae proud," said Sarah Bell. "I'm willing to tak' from them that's willing to gie."

"Oh!" said Mrs Mowbray, "I think I'm a-dying, and ye maun soon come to the same, Sarah; dinna tak' it ill that I gie you a little advice, and advise ye to 'tak' heed to your ways;' for I doubt ye're far from right."

"Ye may keep your doubts to yoursell," said Sarah, getting up in a huff, and preparing to go away; but the sight of a gentleman, who opened the door, arrested her attention.

"She has folk to look after her, as weel as other folk, for a' her speeches," thought Sarah; "but I'll see what he gi'es her. I may come in for a share." So she sat down.

The gentleman was tall and pale; his countenance looked pity, and beamed benevolence; and his voice was like the voice of one accustomed to console. It was the stranger who had visited the poor Simpsons. In his rambles, he heard of Mrs Mowbray, and came to relieve her.

"Good woman," said he, "I had occasion to be in your neighbourhood, and, hearing you were sick, I came to see if I could, by means of money, in any degree soften your sufferings."

"A cup of cold water, given to a disciple, never

loses its reward," said Mrs Mowbray ; " and God will reward your good intents to me ; but blessed be his name, he has never yet allowed me to want. I winna impose upon your goodness ; and I'm expectin' our allowance from our box every minute."

" What a gowk !" thought Sarah Bell ; " I wad like to ken if she wad hae been the waur o' a little mair."

" Good woman," said the gentleman, " take care that pride is not urging you to refuse my offer. That little girl does not look as if she fared too sumptuously.—Here, my dear, are a few biscuits for you, which I had in my pocket."

Patty looked wistfully at her mother. " Yes, you may take them."

" What you say, sir, is very true," said she to the gentleman ; " pride steps in when we're no thinking. Patty is hungry enough, as you see ;" for the biscuits had already almost all disappeared ; " but I canna bear that my bairn should be dependant, but upon Him that feedeth the ravens."

" But there are means appointed for all things," replied the stranger ; " and the love that the brethren in Christ are commanded to bear towards one another, should be received, as it is indeed the fruit of that good seed sown by the Great Ruler of the World. Take, then, a little money from me as the

means appointed by Him who in reality is giving you all things."

"Might I make free to ask who you are," said Mrs Mowbray, "that are sae free in your money, and sae Christain in your talk?"

"I am the servant of our common Master; let that suffice."

"I never heard such a pack of nonsensical havers," thought Mrs Bell, "about nothing at a'."

"A weell," said Mrs Mowbray, "to shew ye I'm no obstinate, if ye'll leave me a shilling, I'se make use o't if our visitors should nae come; but it would be a great relief to my mind, if it please God to send me my usual supply, to return it to you."

"My alms I wish ever to be in secret," said the stranger; "my name I cannot reveal; but be you the steward of that shilling; instead of returning it to me, give it to him that needeth; and may the Lord send a blessing along with it."

He laid down the shilling, and arose to depart; but Mrs Bell, who had been making her reflections, was determined not to be long behind him.

"Good day, Mrs Mowbray," said she; "I'll gie ye a ca' some day soon;" and she followed the stranger down stairs.

"Oh, sir," she began, as she overtook the stranger, "ye seem very gude, but I didna like to trou-

ble you before folk ; I'm often sair pit to't mysell, and this day, I may say, I have nae a penny in the house to buy meat for mysell and weans."

The stranger, though by no means prone to severe or hasty judgments, felt assured that the woman who now addressed him was a character that differed most materially from the one he had just left. He put his hand into his pocket, and, taking out a crown, "There," said he, "is the means to provide thee with the meat that perisheth : Oh ! may thy Saviour give thee, in good time, the bread which cometh down from Heaven !"

"God bless you !" said Sarah, who heard, though she by no means understood, this speech ; "God prosper ye, whaever ye be."

He quickly descended the stair, and soon eluded the slower pace of Sarah, who had determined to follow him, and find his dwelling.

Patty's hunger was a little abated by the biscuits she had received from the stranger ; and about three o'clock the visitors arrived, and paid Mrs Mowbray her allowance. The happy Patty immediately set out for their provisions, and prepared joyfully to make them ready.

Little can the epicure conceive the luxury of eating the plainest food, when seasoned by abstinence ; or the enjoyment that Patty experienced in eating her potatoes and herring, when she recollected how

little prospect she had a few hours before of having any dinner at all.

“ It seemed as if from day to day
They were to eat and die ;
But still, though in a secret way,
He sent a fresh supply.”

The conversation and appearance of the benevolent stranger excited a good deal of speculation in Little Wark's Close ; for Mrs Mowbray had not been the sole inhabitant who had been favoured with his company. Sarah Bell, on describing him to her neighbours, found out that most of them had seen him, and also touched his money ; but none had been able to discover either his name or place of abode. “ He'll just be a gentleman that has ta'en that turn o' gien his money to the poor,” said Sarah Bell ; “ and I se warrant we'll soon find out his name. There's no sac mony has the turn, to their shame be it said !”

But to return to Lady Amelia ;—her enthusiasm in the cause of charity seemed to increase daily. Dr Pelham had resided nearly two months in the family, during which time Lady Amelia, who was naturally of an open disposition, had, in so many instances, revealed her sentiments, that he was persuaded some of the Methodists with which every city abounds, had actually got access to her, and were using their influence clandestinely to undermine her principles, and excite her to rebellion against her parents. Dr Pelham was particularly warm on this subject, as he

had dined the day before in a company where, amongst other characters, Mr Mansfield, (whose very name he abhorred,) was talked of, and he was doomed to hear him extolled as all that a Christian clergyman ought to be, and, what was still more grating to his ears, as a man of the first-rate learning and abilities.

Dr Pelham flattered himself, like too many self-deceivers, that he was actuated by generous friendship and zeal for the Marquis of Vainall's family, in uttering his warm expostulation ; whereas it was the only plausible pretext he had for venting the spleen which had arisen from other causes. He continued in the same strain, till the good-natured Marquis believed all he said, and even caught a little of his warmth.

"Why," said his lordship, "what you say alarms me very much—very much indeed ; something must be done. I think we had better both talk to Amelia, and try to discover how far the evil has gone ; but we must be very gentle with her," said he ; his borrowed wrath was subsiding, "as the girl is of a very timid disposition, and might, through fear, be tempted to conceal from us, what is so essential to be known."

"That caution displays your own good sense, my lord, but it would be well if the tenets of that sect went no further than disguising the truth, which is but a very innocent kind of falsehood ; for I know they inculcate on their votaries, in service of the

cause, to say anything good or bad, true or false, that suits the purpose."

"It is really horrible," said the Marquis, again heating, and shuddering with honest indignation; "I cannot conceive how men, who pretend to have any religion at all, can hold such horrible doctrines." And he rang the bell. •

The servant was ordered to tell Lady Amelia to attend her father in the library.

Lady Amelia was in Mrs Comfit's room, filling a basket of one of her pensioners with needle-cases and pin-cushions for sale, made by herself at her leisure hours, while sitting in the drawing-room; for she feared at any time to have her moments unemployed, and had doubts if working splendid purses for her splendid friends, was improving the time.

She was just filling the basket of the old half-blind woman, and Mrs Comfit was measuring a web, the spinning of others of her pensioners, and the weaver was enlarging on the excellency of his work, when Tom the footman came down with the Marquis's summons. The Marquis was both more patient and better tempered than Mrs Comfit; and as she was engaged at that moment, Tom durst not interrupt her; he chose therefore, to let his master wait. It required more courage than Tom possessed, to enrage the housekeeper of a great family.

Time seemed long to Dr Pelham. "You see," said he to the Marquis, "the girl is conscious of

guilt, from her being so long of obeying the summons—Shall I ring again?”

“If you please.”

Dr Pelham rung a peal that reached Tom's ears, and convinced him he could no longer delay. He rushed into Mrs Comfit's room, and delivered the message to Lady Amelia; who, dismissing the old woman and her basket, prepared immediately to obey, half afraid of what the interview might relate to.

She soon perceived that something was going forward. “Sit down, Amelia,” said her father, and Dr Pelham handed her a chair.

Lady Amelia felt she would rather have chosen to stand. To some people, standing is less annoying than being fastened to a chair when they are embarrassed; and so Lady Amelia felt on this occasion.

Can it be another proposal for me? was the first thought that came across her mind; but her speculations were immediately arrested by her father giving a hem, clearing his voice, and entering upon the matter in question.

“Amelia, my dear,” said he,—for his anger had ebbed again since the bell rang, and he cleared his voice once more,—“you must be sensible that the impropriety you committed in going to the Cowgate, and which, you know, you yourself confessed to me, was of a very serious nature, and that it was attended with a loss of character, as the conduct of Nabob

Mammon clearly evinces ; and, notwithstanding this disappointment to us, you must be sensible that your mother and I have shewn you all the lenity our affections suggested."

" *That* she must be sensible of," said Dr Pelham, with a tone and look intended to inspire the Marquis with a new stock of firmness, and if possible of anger.

The Marquis recommenced, and continued ; " Dr Pelham and myself, *my* friend and *your* best friend, are of opinion, that such determined conduct could not have sprung but from the advice of some of that dangerous sect with whom you seem lately to have been so much charmed."

" Ah, papà !" said Lady Amelia, taking hold of his hand, " how can you suppose that I see or consult any but those I meet in this house ? I assure you I know none of the persons to whom you allude."

Dr Pelham shook his head.

" How then did such ideas enter your head ?" continued her father ; " I am sure Mrs Pelham is incapable of putting such notions into your brain."

" Indeed, papà, she never did."

" I'll answer for her," said Dr Pelham ; " but, my lady, you have never replied directly to your father's question. How did such notions come into your head ? They did not grow of themselves, I'm sure !"

Lady Amelia felt her colour rise, and dropt a few

tears ; her heart was full—she was gentle, and comparatively unused to the language of reproach ; she wiped her eyes, and summoned up courage.

“ Papa, I know you will believe me,” said she ; “ I assure you no notions have ever entered into my head, but what have proceeded from reading my Bible ; there I see the duty of visiting the poor so strongly inculcated, that I cannot find rest for my conscience, but in striving to fulfil this command.”

“ The poor girl’s mad,” said her father, in a melancholy tone.

“ No, no,” said Dr Pelham, “ she is sane enough ; I have seen the thing often before.” Lady Amelia continued to weep in silence, while he proceeded—“ I’ve seen the thing often before ; it proceeds entirely from reading the Bible without understanding it. The Bible is a deep book, and the Bible is an excellent book, but it is the spirit of it on which we must endeavour to act ; instead of taking up a text at random here and there, and applying it to any case, however unsuitable, as many foolish women are too apt to do.”

Lady Amelia felt the attack made upon herself and sex in this speech. Alas ! she had not yet learned the charity which beareth all things. Her tears ceased to flow, and looking at him with considerable spirit, she replied with energy, almost approaching to retort,—“ And is benevolence and charity not in-

culcated in the Bible?—I may say in every line? Is that not then the spirit of the Bible?”

“Moderation in all things is everywhere recommended, my lady, and I shall mark for your perusal the parts of the Bible a lady in your station of life ought to read.”

“I am sure, Dr Pelham, you are very obliging, and take a great deal of trouble for her benefit,” said the Marquis; “and, that it ~~may~~ not be thrown away, I desire, Amelia, that you will read no other parts of the Bible than those recommended by Dr Pelham; and also, that you promise in future to abstain from visiting the poor in person—You may send your maid if necessary.”

Amelia continued to weep, but made no reply.

Dr Pelham raised his head, and cleared his voice.—“I observe,” said he, “that her Ladyship makes no answer.”

The Marquis was getting a little tired, but felt as if obliged to go through with it.

“Amelia, you surely heard me,” said he; “say then that you give your promise to obey me, as is your duty. I am sure the Bible, which you are so fond of quoting, recommends—nay, commands duty and obedience to parents.”

Lady Amelia summoned up courage.—“Yes, papa, in all things not inconsistent with the law of God.”

“What!” cried the Marquis, reddening, “do you dare to disobey me?—’tis too bad indeed.”

“Too bad, ’pon honour,” said Dr Pelham.

“Ah, papa—dear papa, do not think harshly of me,” cried Lady Amelia. “I entreat you, do not ask me to make any promises. I shall endeavour in all I can to obey you; but I cannot promise. I am sure you have always found me an obedient and affectionate daughter.”

“True,” said the Marquis, somewhat overcome—“I must say she has always been such.” He cleared his voice once more—“Well, Amelia, I must say you have always obeyed me better than your sisters have done; continue to do so, and I shall exact no promises; but then, on your part, there must be no concealments. You may leave the room—Remember I will be obeyed.”

Lady Amelia gladly availed herself of the permission to retire, and in the solitude of her own chamber reflected upon what had passed. She now felt placed in the situation of a martyr; and, uncertain how to act, again had recourse to her Bible. There she saw many texts which her conscience could not reconcile with her father’s commands.—“What shall I do?” thought she; “Oh that I had some one to consult—some friend on whom I could rely!”

Her maid at that moment entered the room.—

“ Here is a letter for you, my lady, from the good Mrs Miller.”

“ Who is she ?” asked Lady Amelia ; “ I never heard of her.”

“ She is a very good lady, and is well known,” answered the maid ; “ I see her every Sunday at Mr Mansfield’s church.”

The letter was elegantly written, and in a few words apologized for troubling Lady Amelia ; but having been referred to her by a woman named Sarah Bell for a character, Mrs Miller requested she would state what she knew concerning her, that she might be enabled to apply to the Society, from whom Mrs Bell was desirous of receiving assistance.—Lady Amelia instantly formed the resolution of calling upon Mrs Miller herself, and giving her all the information in her power concerning Sarah Bell. She therefore named an early hour the following morning for waiting upon her ; hoping that, at the same time, something might occur in the course of the conversation applicable to her own case.

The conference between the Marquis and Dr Pelham continued some time longer, when all the scriptural knowledge possessed by the latter, was employed by him, in persuading his lordship to look a little more strictly after his daughter.

“ A little wholesome, timely severity, may save a

great deal of after repentance," said this mistaken man.

Had he not been as ignorant of the human mind as of the Christian religion, he would have known that anything like persecution is the surest means of giving vigour and firmness to the Christian character; and that the powerful grace of God, which had awakened the heart of the timid Lady Amelia, prepared her mind, by this first attack, to examine into rights of conscience which might otherwise have lain unconsidered and unknown. All things are blessings to those who are God's people; but it is much to be feared, that many nominal Christians mistake the natural resistance that every mind makes to persecution, for the noble spirit of zeal and martyrdom by which the true Christian is distinguished.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ Many know how to discuss matters ; few how to appreciate them.”

MRS MILLER was not one of those who say and do not ; the promise of a Christian was with her a binding thing, and therefore she was cautious in her words. She had taken Sarah Bell’s address, and determined to seize the first opportunity of going to her dwelling.

“ Mamma,” said little Anna, her only daughter, “ I see you are going out, may I go with you ?”

“ No, my dear,” answered her mother ; “ have you already forgotten your yesterday’s sin ? Have you forgotten that I promised to punish you ?”

“ Ah, mamma, pray pardon me for this once,” said little Anna.

“ Be not so forgetful, my dear—Do I ever break my promise ? Do not ask me again—remember your punishment is, that for this week you visit no poor person with me.”

Anna knew her mother, and knew that expostulation was vain ; she went away disappointed, but

was careful to avoid the same fault again. It is God only who can change the heart ; but there is a promise given to those who shall “ train up a child in the way he should go,”—and the promise is from Him who in all things is faithful and true.

The manner in which Mrs Miller educated her daughter was much censured by many, but in particular by her old acquaintance, Mrs Careful, who pursued quite an opposite system with her own daughter Lucy. Indeed, the spring of their actions was so totally different, that none of their thoughts or sentiments could be expected to have much resemblance. Mrs Careful occupied herself much in wondering how people could differ from herself in their ways of thinking and acting ; and Mrs Miller was, therefore, an inexhaustible theme for her.—“ I really cannot but wonder at Mrs Miller,” she would say ; “ she has but one daughter, and one would almost think she wished to get rid of her ; for she takes the poor thing into places where disease and contagion of every description are raging. My wonder is she has not killed the child long ago.”

This, however, was only a supposition of Mrs Careful's ; for Mrs Miller never took her daughter into any house where there was any infectious disorder ; and if it occurred without her knowledge, that herself or her child had been exposed to such risk, she committed her darling to the care of that

watchful Providence who had hitherto preserved her. "There is an appointed time, my Bible tells me," said she, "and shall I give way to all the cares and anxieties of worldly people, as if I dared to think any of its assurances untrue?"

Mrs Careful, on the other hand, was in a state of constant anxiety about all things, and in particular about the health of herself and daughter. It seemed as if she thought she walked hand in hand with Providence, though at the same time she limited its superintendence to some few very great events—such as storms, earthquakes, revolutions, and the like.

"If I did not take the greatest care, what would become of my daughter?" she used to say. "There was poor Patty Stranchels died 'tother day owing to having sat with wet feet, and little Jane Keeper caught a fever from a woman who came to sell china at the door. I'm sure it is a miracle to me, that Anne Miller is still alive; and yet the child looks stout and healthy too,—stouter, perhaps, even than my Lucy, though no thanks to her wild wrong-headed mother." "I wonder, Mrs Miller," said she one day, "I wonder you are not more careful about poor Anna, sending her about to public schools in all weathers, where she must often sit with wet feet."

"Pardon me," said Mrs Miller, "she very seldom sits with wet shoes, as she generally carries a pair of dry ones with her. I always use the means I deem

best for the preservation of her health ;—her life is in the keeping of a higher hand.”

Mrs Careful seemed not to hear this last observation, but resumed,—“ I’m sure it is a miracle to me to see your Anne in life.”

“ And what, my dear madam, is our whole life, but a miracle ?” said Mrs Miller ; “ Were our Creator to withdraw his care but for one moment, where should we be ? Can he that created, not preserve ? Is it not in Him that ‘ we live, and move, and have our being ?’ ”

“ O, if you go to the Bible, I am done with you,” said Mrs Careful. “ I know you have it all at your finger-ends.”

“ And what other authority can a Christian have for any of his actions ?” said Mrs Miller.

“ Common sense,” said Mrs Careful, with a look which she deemed unanswerable.

“ And whence can common sense be derived, but from Him who is the inspirer of every good thought ?”

“ You know, Mrs Miller, I cannot argue with you ; but common sense is common sense all the world over.”

Mrs Miller would have answered ; but, despairing of convincing, she, with a Christian spirit, allowed Mrs Careful to have the last word,—a piece of self-denial by no means so easy as thoughtless observers may suppose, but which many of my readers will doubtless be able to appreciate.

Mrs Miller, to whom the haunts of wretchedness were well known, had little difficulty in finding Mrs Bell; and by a few pointed queries, very soon discovered more of that personage's real character, than Lady Amelia's inexperience would have led her to in a great length of time. She saw the moral disease, and proceeded to propose the remedies. "You can spin, no doubt?" said she; but Mrs Bell was crafty, and had a foreboding that to such a question the mention of the House of Industry always followed, and her answer was ready.

"Spin! me spin, ma'am, wi' that weary bairn on my hands, and the rheumatism in my tither arm—look at it, ma'am. I havena been able to do a turn wi't this mony a day."

But Mrs Miller's experienced eye soon perceived that the arm was like any other idle arm. She knew, however, that rheumatism was more easily cured than idleness, and allowed that to pass for the present.

"Well, I can give you a line to the Beggar's Repository, and you will perhaps get an allowance of soup and bread from it; and I shall likewise recommend you to the Clothing Society."

Mrs Bell was aware she would not subscribe to the rules of the Soup Kitchen, by acknowledging herself a beggar, and she had recourse to fiction to escape the snare. "O, ma'am, what would I do without the soup?—I get it every day.—Wull gangs

when I'm no able." Mrs Miller was pleased to hear this, as she knew that some decency of character was requisite to entitle her to receive even this scanty pittance. "Then clothing is what you stand most in need of? I do not know you well enough myself, but there must be some one who can give you a character?"

"Ay, there is that! Lady Amelia Truefeel, a fine young leddy, kens me weel; she'll no refuse to gie me a character, I'm sure."

"I shall probably see her to-morrow," said Mrs Miller; "and will converse with her about you. Are you sure I shall also get a good character of you from your neighbours?"

"That ye will, mem,—I'm sure enough o' that; nane that speaks truth, will speak ill o' me."

"'Tis a small matter, you know, to be judged of men's judgment," said Mrs Miller; "but I trust the good report you bear, by your own account, amongst your fellow-creatures, will be confirmed at the tribunal of God."

"That's true, mem. God grant it may be sae!"

"You may come to my house the day after to-morrow then, when I shall be able to tell you what can be done for you."

"O, mem, if you wad but help me a little in the meantime, it wad be very considerate, for I havena

a bit to pit into the bairns' mouths this day, and the Lord kens whar I'm to get it—for I may weel say, I can neither work nor want."

Mrs Miller did not like this frequent importunity. She knew that God seldom leaves even the poorest of his creatures absolutely destitute, unless their vices lend weight to their misfortunes.

"Why, where is the money you got from Lady Amelia Truefeel?" asked Mrs Millar.

"O, mem," said Sarah, "I didna like to tell her ladyship, she had been sae gude; but I was deep in debt to my landlord, and I payed it like an honest woman the first money I had."

"I have only a sixpence," said Mrs Miller; "but that, properly managed, may maintain you all day."

"God bless your ladyship, and may ye never want," whined Mrs Bell.

Mrs Miller departed, and visited several of her pensioners on her way home. Some were changed in heart, and taught more or less by God; others, alas! had still their hopes, their joys in this world. To them she addressed the reproofs from the Bible,—
"Awake from the dead, thou that sleepest." "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" &c.

Some were stretched upon the bed of death, strong in hope, and comparatively happy. Those simple Christians, without the aid of philosophy, and not even possessed of natural strength of mind, were able

to hear and talk of death with as much firmness, and without the applause which attended the last moments of Socrates. How unlike the death-beds of the rich and great ! Alas ! with what care is the approach of death too often concealed from the sufferers, whose own feelings nevertheless give the lie to the flattering speeches, and vain deceptions, of their misjudging friends ; and whose fears and anxieties prey the more upon their minds from the obstacles thrown in the way of communicating their apprehensions. How mistaken is mere human wisdom ! Many, by their ill-timed caution, produce the very effects they wish to avoid. But Mrs Miller was better taught. “ Truth at all times must be best,” said she ; “ no good can ever come of deception.” When her little Anna had any of the diseases of childhood, the physicians never were taken apart from the child ; but her danger was known to herself as soon as to her mother ; and she was taught to pray to her Father in Heaven, to bless the means used for her recovery. She thus early learned the precariousness of life, even to the young, and that it was no vain fable that man is born to die.

This part of Mrs Miller’s conduct also gave great offence to her observing neighbours, and Mrs Careful failed not to make her comments on it. “ It is enough to kill any child,” said she, “ to be told her life is in danger ; but, as I have always said, it is a miracle to me to see Anne Miller alive.”

“ I have never known any professors of mere morality do much good,” Mrs Miller used to say ; “ in their own persons, perhaps, they do little harm, and some of them are very inoffensive members of society.”

“ Commend me to your inoffensive members of society,” Mrs Careful would answer ; “ were we all inoffensive, this would be a very good world.”

“ I grant it would,” said Mrs Miller ; “ but as the world is a fallen, wicked world, what are the means God usually employs to produce the moral improvements that are visibly going forward ? It cannot be denied, that all self-devoted benevolence, all active charity, all missions to promote Christianity ; or, if you please to call it, for the civilization of the world, are undertaken by the evangelical Christians.”

“ I do not know very well whom you call evangelical Christians,” said Mrs Careful, who was particularly well-informed upon every other point ; “ for my part, I know nothing of your cant terms, but I’m sure the Sydney family don’t approve of any of these things, and they are everything that is amiable and respectable.”

“ We are forbidden to judge our neighbours,” said Mrs Miller ; “ the Sydneys are certainly a charming family. They love one another, and fulfil the moral duties, I have no doubt. They are wise as to this world—God grant they may also be wise as to the next !”

Mrs Careful reddened. “ You are really ridiculous. You will allow nobody to be good, except your own sect.”

“ I cannot,” said Mrs Miller, “ applaud Mr Sydney very highly, merely for loving a very amiable wife, and being very fond of his children, though I should find great fault with him for doing the reverse. He likewise fulfils very well the duties of his office, but he certainly would lose it if he did not. Mr Sydney is a man of sense, and he may be a sincere Christian ; but all the duties he is so much commended for fulfilling, certainly may be fulfilled without that spirit that would sacrifice all to God,—without understanding what is required by him who saith, “ Whosoever loveth father or mother, or husband or wife, or children, or lands, more than me, is not worthy of me.”

“ You will allow nobody to be good but yourselves,” said Mrs Careful, with some asperity.

“ God forbid that should be the case !” answered Mrs Miller ; “ having done all, we must still be unprofitable servants.”

“ I don’t understand what it is you would be at,” said Mrs Careful ; “ let every one be as good as he can. I don’t wish to be any better than the Sydneys ; but let us speak of something else, for there’s no end to religious disputes.—Did you hear that Mrs Syd-

ney's eldest son is returned from the continent? he seems a most charming young man—just his father all over, with the addition of being uncommonly handsome. If I were a young lady, I assure you I would not answer for my heart. As Lady Maria Murphy says, his manners are a perfect pattern for all young men—and his morals too, I think; for he is a most regular attender of church. In short, he seems to me everything that a young man should be.”

Mrs Miller could have answered; but she knew Mrs Careful was in a humour to misinterpret everything she said. She therefore contented herself with merely saying, “ I am glad Mr George Sydney is so fine a young man, and trust he will prove a comfort to his parents.”

The Sydneys were indeed riddles to many Christians, as well as to Mrs Miller. They spoke not the language of the children of Zion. They went not into their councils, yet they had no particular enmity towards them, but piqued themselves upon being supporters of liberal sentiments, and workers of every good work. The Sydneys were people of taste, and admired with enthusiasm the morality of the New Testament; but their religion was the religion of feeling, more than the religion of faith. They had never felt that they were sinners; and all of virtue that could please human critics, was exemplified in their outward demeanour. But the Christian, whose standard is

high, could easily have discerned how many sins of omission would weigh down their consciences, if it pleased God to make the light of his glorious gospel shine into their hearts. There is reason to think that those who do not belong to Christ have not the same inward struggles and temptations, as those whom the Almighty permits Satan to tempt, that he may make known what is in their hearts, as he did with Job of old.

CHAPTER XV.

THE morning at the Marquis of Vainall's was passed as usual in arranging places for the business, or rather for the idleness, of the day. The Marquis had somehow fallen behind hand in reading the yesterday's papers, and had to make up his lee-way. The Marchioness had letters to write ; Dr Pelham had visits to pay ; Mrs Pelham had shopping on hand ; and Ladies Jane and Maria kindly undertook to accompany her. Lady Amelia, therefore, found herself at liberty to fulfil her engagement with Mrs Miller, without exciting any speculation. She was of an open disposition, and also fond of peace, but she did not feel called upon to court opposition ; and although she did not think it necessary to announce her intention, she had no purpose of concealing her visit, should she be asked, on her return, how she had passed the forenoon.

She set off alone ; and musing on what she was to say, she found herself at the door of Mrs Miller. She announced herself, and was cordially received by that lady, in a parlour, which, if not elegant, had an

air of comfort and neatness, sometimes wanting in more splendid apartments. Mrs Miller's manners, as well as principles, were formed from the Bible ; in particular, from that fine picture of a Christian, drawn by St Paul in the 13th chapter of the 1st Corinthians. Lady Amelia's preconceived ideas of the austerity generally to be expected from religious characters vanished at sight of Mrs Miller. The calm, sweet gentleness of her manners, the openness and truth of her speech, struck her very forcibly ; and in the romance of a youthful imagination, she formed impressions of religious characters which were never effaced.

She told Mrs Miller all she knew of Sarah Bell ; and by that lady's directions, wrote, according to the prescribed form, a recommendation of Sarah to the Cloathing Society, which Mrs Miller undertook to deliver at the next meeting. Lady Amelia felt happy at this opportunity of conversing with a decidedly religious character ; and her natural timidity yielded to the hope of gaining some instruction to guide her in her charitable career, and also of ascertaining how far her ideas agreed with those of evangelical Christians upon many points. In talking of the miseries of the poor, Mrs Miller said, that a benevolent God had kindly implanted in almost all his creatures, more or less, a desire to relieve suffering, which did not entirely leave the human breast, till hardened in selfishness and vice.

“ True,” said Lady Amelia. “ I have found it so in my own experience ; for I cannot rest when I see my fellow-creatures in misery, without doing all in my power to relieve them. I would part with all I possess for that purpose. The Scripture commands it, and I cannot conceive how those who neglect good works can ever hope for Heaven.”

Lady Amelia blushed as she spoke,—feeling as if she had boasted of her own good deeds, and transgressed against that beautiful attribute of charity, which—“ vaunteth not itself.”

“ Good works are indeed commendable,” said Mrs Miller ; “ and works done in Christ shall not lose their reward. But, alas ! how do we know how to do good unless taught by his spirit ? For Benevolence, in its utmost extent, is declared by the Scriptures to be nothing till inspired by love to Him who has commanded it ; and fatally, I fear, will those find themselves mistaken, who trust to their good deeds for salvation.”

Lady Amelia looked and felt surprised.—“ Is it possible, madam,” said she, “ that you who are so celebrated for good deeds should be one of those who deny their efficacy ? I know that the Pharisee, who was proud and presumptuous, was not accepted ; but I have been accustomed to think that the language of the Bible is—Be humble ; do good ; and ye shall be rewarded.”

Mrs Miller was aware that she was talking to a young and inexperienced convert. She was therefore cautious of entering upon ground too sacred to be lightly trod, and where error might prove fatal. Her own principles were strong and confirmed, but of her ability to convey the same to others she had many doubts. She therefore, in a silent prayer, implored the assistance of that mighty Being, before whom all the thoughts of the heart are open. "What you say, my dear Lady Amelia," replied she, "is a part, but by no means the whole of the truth. I am weak in understanding, and unable of myself to express what I feel; but I am encouraged, when I recollect the story of the little Hebrew maid, whose simple efforts were blessed in converting the great Syrian Naaman,—an example to the feeblest of us all to omit no opportunity of declaring the truth."

"I believe that is in the Old Testament, which I never read," said Lady Amelia.

"Never read the Old Testament!" said Mrs Miller; "In that case I do not think you can possibly understand the New—Our Saviour commands us to 'read and search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of me.'"

"Since you recommend me, I certainly will," said Lady Amelia.

"May I ask what church your ladyship sits in?"

“ Our family pew is in Dr Sweetly’s,” answered Lady Amelia.

Mrs Miller sighed—“ I believe Dr Sweetly is an excellent man, but I fear he is not likely to give you much instruction—we cannot judge entirely for others, but I should find no profit in hearing him. I am told he denies that fundamental doctrine upon which, I think, Christianity depends,—the original fall and total depravity of every human being.”

“ Surely we are not all so wicked,” said Lady Amelia.

“ I can only declare to you what I am certain the Scriptures declare—That there is none good—no not one—that our righteousness is polluted in the sight of God, and if he should mark iniquity, we are lost and undone.”

“ I am sure Dr Sweetly never tells us anything of that kind,” said Lady Amelia.

“ I fear not,” said Mrs Miller. “ It is a truth we can never convey to others till we believe it from our own experience. Oh ! that it may please God to enlighten his mind ! but if you would do me the favour to accompany me to Mr Mansfield’s church some Sabbath, you will there hear from him truths of which I cannot doubt, and which have been of the most essential benefit to my soul.”

Lady Amelia blushed and was embarrassed. Here was a trial for her !—“ Though it would give me

the greatest pleasure," said she, "I fear that is more than I dare venture upon; for my parents would object much to my absenting myself from Dr Sweetly's; and besides, I am afraid Dr Sweetly would be hurt at it."

"As to that," said Mrs Miller, "I must do him the justice to say, I believe him to be too liberal in his opinions to object to people acting according to conscience; and I have heard he is too proud to lay any restraint upon his hearers."

"But you must allow my other reasons to be very strong?" asked Lady Amelia; "since obedience to parents is one of the commands of God."

"Only in the Lord," replied Mrs Miller, involuntarily.—Lady Amelia became thoughtful, and in the course of conversation gave Mrs Miller to understand that her parents by no means entertained the same ideas with herself upon religion; but she carefully avoided any hints that she had already met with opposition in matters of conscience; for both her principles and affections led her to wish, as much as possible, to honour her parents. Mrs Miller invited her to drink tea a few days afterwards, when she would be able to inform her of the success of her application for Sarah Bell. Lady Amelia gladly accepted the invitation conditionally; meaning to ask her father's consent, which, from his easy good-nature,

she had no doubt of obtaining, provided Dr Pelham was not in the way.

Though little had been said, many new ideas had arisen in Lady Amelia's mind from this conversation, and when she came home, she retired to her room, and opening her Bible, sought for the passages Mrs Miller had quoted. Their meaning perplexed her, and, in a fit of despair, she applied to Dr Pelham for an explanation. Surprised, and almost flattered by the deference implied in this reference, he, with more gentleness than usual, replied,—“ My dear Lady Amelia, these passages, and indeed almost all the writings of St Paul, should be taken in a limited sense, and as applicable only to the times in which they were written, and by no means suited to the Christians of the present day. It is the spirit of the book, as I have before told your ladyship ; 'tis the spirit of the book we must attend to.”

This was a mode of avoiding all pointed explanation, which Dr Pelham always had recourse to when at a loss. Indeed, to do him justice, he always avoided anything like a religious conversation, on pretence of its being too sacred a theme for ordinary discussion.

Mrs Miller, on the other hand, reflected upon what her young friend had said to her. She saw how differently they thought ; yet she well knew that the Spirit of God reveals itself in truth to the mind, where and how it listeth ; and that all Christians,

when once enlightened, feel the same sentiments, and talk the same language, upon the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity, however much they may differ upon what may be termed non-essentials.

Mrs Miller was a woman of a liberal mind, but her whole life had been spent among religious people. She had therefore no notion of the trials of those who are placed in different circumstances. Yet, perhaps, Christians who are placed in the world so called, are not in reality in greater danger of self-delusion than those whom Providence has placed amongst high professors. Dangers abound to the children of God in every stage of this mortal existence; and He who has called them, alone can keep them. Those who are in worldly society, learn in time to cast off the fear of man, and to look, with singleness of heart, to please God. They become scrupulously watchful in their conduct, in a situation where the most trivial flaw in their character is laid hold of, and liable to misrepresentation, and where difficulties are for ever thrown in their way after Christian usefulness. They have trials which are quite unknown amongst those who live as brethren, in fellowship with one another. But, on the other hand, fatal security, self-deception, spiritual pride, illiberal prejudices, are not so likely to be snares in their path. But the great Master of the vineyard knows exactly where to place his servants, and will assuredly make a way of escape from every tempta-

tion, for all those who put their trust in him. This truth Mrs Miller had experienced in her own lot ; and the same Saviour who had guided her to the knowledge of the truth, was preparing means to open the eyes of another of his flock—even Lady Amelia Truefeel.

CHAPTER XVI.

LADY AMELIA awoke in the morning, still meditating on what had passed at Mrs Miller's, and how to obtain her father's permission to drink tea with that lady. But who knows what a day will bring forth? The Marchioness had likewise her cogitations, and had arranged in her planning head that the charge of entertaining Mrs Pelham should this day devolve upon Lady Amelia. And as to will and to do were generally the same with her ladyship, she soon settled the business of the day to her own satisfaction. "Amelia," said she, "your sisters and I must leave cards this morning; you will therefore accompany Mrs Pelham in her drive to Beauideal: we owe the Sydneys a visit, and this is a good opportunity of returning it, and giving you a treat at the same time."

Lady Amelia coloured, not with pleasure, but with the pain an ingenuous mind feels in being obliged to acquiesce in what is not the truth. In Mrs Pelham's company she never felt aught but *ennui*; and the prospect of being shut up in a carriage with her, *tete-a-tete*, was any thing but agreeable. She

would have enjoyed the drive had she been alone, or at liberty to indulge her own meditations ; but, with Mrs Pelham for a companion, she well knew there was neither rest nor reflection to be expected. Ideas that lady had none ; but she had a constant call for interchange of words.

How many different modes there are of talking ! The mere interrogatory, without aiming at any particular information—the lively chatter—the endless and promiscuous babble—the relating of low anecdotes—the retailing of other men’s jests—the elegant selections from works of taste—the conversation which springs from a mind which has read much and digested well, till the wisdom of others has become a part of its own nature—the flashes of light that display and adorn the rapid conceptions of heaven-taught genius.

But lest I have not made it plain to which class Mrs Pelham belonged, I shall give a specimen of her conversation as they rolled along the road to Beauideal. Lady Amelia would fain have indulged in musings upon faith, righteousness, and judgment to come, when her neighbour, with an awakening word, like a pebble thrown into a smooth lake, thus began —“ Pray, do you think we shall be back in time to dress for dinner ?”

“ I hope so,” replied Lady Amelia ; “ but the road is very hilly.”

“ I wish,” said Mrs Pelham, “ to put on the new gown I shewed you yesterday, and you know it requires a great deal of pinning to make it sit well.”

“ I did not know that,” said Lady Amelia.

“ Whether do you like that or my primrose satin ?”

Lady Amelia felt rather at a loss, not having observed what dress Mrs Pelham had worn ; she therefore candidly confessed her ignorance or inattention ; but had she been aware of the consequences of such an avowal, it is doubtful whether she would have had the courage thus boldly to declare the truth.

“ That is very extraordinary,” said Mrs Pelham, “ not to have noticed a dress which was so much admired ; but I shall describe them both to you, though description never can do justice to dress,—so much depends on the manner of putting on, as well as the figure of the wearer.”

Here she entered into a minute detail of the dresses in question. No part of the trimming or finishing of any kind was omitted ; her memory being extremely minute and tenacious.—“ In short,” said she, “ my primrose dress is exactly the same with that worn by Mrs Splash at her last ball, which she gave the first week I was in Edinburgh. Don’t you remember it now, my dear ?”

Even an enthusiastic mantua-maker must have tired of this. Rocks, woods, skies, were passed in silent indifference ; and Lady Amelia felt, that, with-

out a violent effort on her part, her mind was to be led by her frivolous companion's into a discussion upon dresses and trimmings during the whole of the beautiful drive. To add to her torments, Mrs Pelham had a most unpleasant way of placing her head very near her companion's, and fastening her weak unmeaning eyes upon her victims—yielding, bending, or turning her head, till she met theirs; thereby securing her captives, and depriving them of the free use of every sense while listening to her idle chatter. Lady Amelia was one of those characters whose gentleness prevented the stronger parts of her feelings from having full play; but she determined to make an attempt to extricate herself from the net thus thrown over her.

“Would not you take this lace to be real Brussels?” said Mrs Pelham, pointing to her pelisse.—

“O, pray look what a beautiful cottage,” cried Lady Amelia. “I daresay it is one of those built by the benevolent Mr Neatoutdoors, who is doing so much to promote cleanliness and neatness amongst the poor.”

“Very neat indeed,” said Mrs Pelham; “’tis like one of those we see at the theatre in the new play of the Palace turned Cottage. I shall have one made at our gate when I go home.”

Lady Amelia was afraid of letting the ball out of her own hand by means of a pause; she therefore de-

terminated to talk on, though despairing of finding in her auditors one who could understand her.

“ If Mr Neatoutdoors thinks that by building a neat cottage, he can teach us neatness, I fear he is much mistaken ; this generation must first pass away, and a new race, with new habits, possess their dwellings. This cottage reminds me of the beautiful description of one in my favourite Cowper ;” and she repeated,

“ A cottage whither oft we since repose,
’Tis perch’d upon the green hill-top, but close
Environ’d with a ring of branching elms,
That overhang the thatch.”

Mrs Pelham had that sort of ear which liked the jingle of rhyme ; and, in return for Lady Amelia’s recitation, she repeated the exquisite, though inappropriate, Ode to the Passions, which had been impressed on her memory when at school. Lady Amelia admired it, and Mrs Pelham repeated another ; and Lady Amelia, in her turn, made a selection from her well-stored memory ; and thus the airing was got over. The stupidest people, when properly managed, are capable of yielding some entertainment ; and strong minds will ever be found to rule over weak ones, when stimulated to make the requisite exertion. Thus they reached Beauideal, the seat of the Honourable Mr Sydney.

“ What a handsome gate !” cried Mrs Pelham. “ Is that the family-arms on the top ? A very fine place,

indeed ! Puts me much in mind of Lady Jointure's seat near us in Dundershire. I hope they will be at home, for I daresay the inside of such a house will be worth seeing."

Her hopes were realized ; for the footman who opened the door replied in the affirmative ; and they were ushered into an elegant apartment, where Mrs Sydney and two young ladies received them. Their manners were courteous and refined, yet they were totally different from those of Mrs Miller ; their language was also different, and their ideas seemed to run in an opposite channel. So Lady Amelia discovered, after having exchanged a few sentences with them. After the usual compliments and inquiries, Mrs Sydney said, she hoped they had not come so far for a morning visit, and begged to be allowed to order their horses to be put up till after dinner. After a few faint objections, Mrs Pelham consented to this proposal, and Lady Amelia agreed that it would answer quite as well to return to town in the evening.

The day was fine, and Mrs Sydney proposed a walk to the garden. There was a spacious greenhouse full of the first forced flowers of spring. Mrs Sydney was an enthusiast in flowers, and entered into a minute history of every plant and its properties. " I spend a great deal of my time here," said she, " cleaning and pruning my favourites with my own hands ; 'tis a delightful occupation, and I cannot tell

you the satisfaction I feel when any of my flowers carry off the prize at the Horticultural Society.— ‘Who loves a garden loves a green-house too’— Paradise was a garden, and Adam was a gardener.’”

“It must be a great pleasure to you to have early flowers to cut for your sick neighbours,” said Lady Amelia.

“Or to make a bouquet for a ball,” said Mrs Pelham.

“I perceive, ladies,” said Mrs Sydney, smiling, “that neither of you is a real lover of plants, or you could not talk so coolly of cutting them for any purpose whatever. I really doubt if I could cut any one of my darlings to save the life of any old woman in the parish.”

Mrs Sydney continued some time longer discouraging through the green-house, till Lady Amelia began to think it was possible to be too fond of flowers. Yet “to the pure all things are pure,” and every science and every pursuit is sanctified in the use, and keeps its proper place in the heart of a real Christian. What were Mrs Sydney’s religious sentiments she had not yet been able to discover; and as yet could form no conjecture whether her Saviour or her plants occupied most of her heart. The Miss Sydneys now joined them, and assisted their mother in shewing the beauties of the place. Miss Caroline Sydney was a first-rate sketcher, and looked with the eye of an artist on every tree, and rock, and ruin; and she therefore

undertook to conduct Lady Amelia to the most picturesque points of view. And Lady Amelia found her mind more interested in admiring nature in the extended landscape than in the minutiae of a flower.

“ Look at these cottages,” said Miss Caroline, “ they are quite my delight ; I have drawn them in I don’t know how many different forms ; they are very old and crazy, and papa threatens to take them down, which will be quite cruel ;—to be sure, he means to build new ones in their place ; but they will quite spoil the view.”

“ Ah, but the people who live in them will be so much more comfortable, that the view will appear finer to you than ever,” said Lady Amelia.

“ That may be very true,” said Miss Caroline ; “ but I perceive you are more an enthusiast in men and women than in picturesque cottages, or you could not talk so coolly of destroying the labours of that fine artist—Time.—By the bye, there is a good old man lives in one of them.”

“ Is he a Methodist ?” asked Lady Amelia.

Miss Sydney smiled.—“ I know little of his moral and religious qualities ; by good, I mean that he is a good figure for putting into a sketch—has a fine bald head, and rather a graceful bend. I have made him stand to me for his picture very often. There was a lady visiting here last summer, who admired him very much as a model for an old man. She was

a great designer of Scripture-pieces for children, and he did for Elisha, the prophet, ascending the mountain. Don't you draw, Lady Amelia?"

"Very little," replied she; "it occupies a great deal of time, and I never could find any useful purpose to apply my labours to; but your friend has given me a hint—Pray, what is her name?"

"Miss Rachael Vandyke, and she really draws beautifully; but I should rather grudge my time and talents upon such trifling things as pictures for little books, and so forth."

"Pray, what do you do with your drawings?" asked Lady Amelia.

"I paste them into a book, and shew them to my friends. You shall see them, if you have a mind, when we go home."

They returned by a beautiful walk by the river, and Miss Caroline displayed much taste and knowledge in her observations on the laying out of grounds.—"We have a great deal of pleasure-ground," said she, "and papa employs a great many poor people in keeping it in order. Surely you will approve of that?"

"I should grudge nothing so much," said Lady Amelia, "as wasting so much ground, and employing so many people in labour that was to produce thing."

"You must either be a philosopher or a miser,"

said Miss Sydney, laughing. "What would you do, pray?"

"Why, instead of being at pains to keep the grass short and smooth, I would let it grow long, and then have the people make it into hay, to feed their horses with."

"What a vulgar idea for a lady of fashion!" said Miss Sydney. "Now I would keep it neater still, and have dances and *fêtes champêtres*, and have the trees hung with coloured lamps."

"What an idea for a lover of the picturesque!" said Lady Amelia.

"O, every thing in its place and season. But here come mamma, my sister, and Mrs Pelham—I see she has persuaded mamma to give her a nosegay, which is a compliment indeed."

Miss Matilda Sydney seemed a little tired of her company, and joined Lady Amelia for the remainder of the walk. Music was her idol, and she was quite as enthusiastic a votary of the one Muse, as her sister was of the other. "How charmingly the birds sing," said she to Lady Amelia. "After all, I doubt if any chorus can equal the music of the air—'Tis wonderful, that though all the birds sing different notes, and all at once, without arrangement or plan, yet no discord grates upon the ear—all is harmony."

"Because," said Lady Amelia, "the great Composer tuned each instrument, and arranged his or-

chestra with skill, surpassing all that human intellect could compass."

"You are a musician?" said Miss Sydney.

"I am very fond of it, but I have not enough of time to devote to it."

"Visiting runs away with one's time sadly in town," said Miss Sydney.

"Ah! there are poor to be visited everywhere," said Lady Amelia.

"The poor are a great bore," said Miss Sydney; " 'tis so impossible to get them to keep their houses neat."

"I should be ashamed to take a stranger into any of our cottages," said Miss Caroline.—"No, do stop here a moment; this is by far the best view we have of the church."

At the word church Lady Amelia felt her hopes revive, that it might lead to some more interesting conversation, and she asked, "Pray, have you a good clergyman?"

"No, we are rather ill off in that respect; a most unsocial being; but indeed what better could be expected from a rigid Calvinist! Not that he is a bad man either; all the old women, and very godly sort, swear by him. But he talks of nothing but building and visiting schools, as if there were nothing but poor children in the world; of course he is vastly popular with the lower orders, for he preaches in the strangest

vulgar manner, and the most extraordinary doctrines—would make us all out to be sinners.”

But here the two parties met and mingled, and so did the conversation. It was of a higher tone than that of the Marchioness of Vainall's and her daughters, but still it was of the world—a more refined world—a more elegant world—a more amusing world—it was the world in its highest natural state. Mrs Pelham was rather at a loss ; her knowledge on all points was so limited, and so local, and so common-place ; but the ladies understood good breeding, and drew her out as far as she could go, but no farther. She could talk upon dress, she could talk upon operas, she could talk upon painted screens, she could talk upon lap-dogs ; in short, she could talk a little upon all little things. Mrs Sydney and her daughters could also talk well upon little things, but they talked of them as if to convince their auditors that the whole of their knowledge was not displayed or exhausted. The interior of Beauideal house corresponded in all respects with the grounds ; it was elegantly furnished, and contained all that could be wanted for comfort, and likewise much that was not wanted ; but there was no bad taste ; nothing that might not be supposed to be conducive to ease and enjoyment. There were likewise some elegant faults, and some points that admitted of argument ; for instance, there was no window in the drawing-room that looked to the river, and even if there had, the

river could not be seen because of the trees, and the trees were too fine to be cut down. Some were for opening a bow window in that direction, and looking at the trees ; others were for cutting down the trees first, to see how the river looked ; and others were for leaving things *in statu quo*. There were many things that might be done as improvements, and many different ways of doing them, and many different people to consult about them.

Beauideal had the name of being a delightful house, and happy they who were invited to spend some weeks there. But to how many people would all its pleasures have seemed tasteless and soulless ! Religion here was considered more as a matter of form than as a thing that was to engross the whole heart of men ; and the opinions of their favourite politicians were more respected than the opinions of the Apostles ; for a clever man was here considered as a wise man.

At dinner Mr Sydney and his son made their appearance. Mr Sydney was a clever man, and in most points a liberal man ; he was upon the whole a promoter of Christianity, as conducive to the best interests of man in this life ; its influence beyond the grave was with him a doubtful point ; but he did not express this doubt to all ; for he thought the superstition, if it were one, could do no harm. The sneer of the infidel was therefore ever repressed at his ta-

ble ; and what he deemed the ravings of enthusiasm, listened to with outward respect.

Mr George Sydney, his eldest son, was just returned from the continent, and seemed deserving of the praises bestowed upon him by Mrs Careful. He had a fine countenance, and an elegant figure ; in short, he was in all respects a very handsome man. His views and sentiments were quite as liberal as his father's ; but religion was in his eye a matter of more importance ; for by his good works, as taught in Scripture, he trusted to obtain his soul's salvation. The dinner conversation was extremely lively and agreeable ; and Lady Amelia felt much pleased with her friends. The use and abuse of charities were ably debated by the Mr Sydneys, with the views of statesmen on this important point—poors rates—Owen's plans—education—schools—human plans and improvements, were canvassed ; but the Divine commands in these matters were never once alluded to. Mrs Pelham thought the conversation rather tiresome ; but she had beautiful dessert plates, with pictures upon them to look at. Poetry, music, statuary, all in their turn were discussed. Mr George Sydney had been acquainted with Lord B. ; had even some unpublished lines of his in his pocket-book ; had been intimate with Madame de Stael ; in short, had conversed with some of the finest souls in Europe. Lady Amelia felt this dinner a feast of reason, and yet

there was a want ; a something loftier, purer, more soul-engrossing still. And still it was something far beyond the ordinary run of Edinburgh dinners ; and when she bade adieu to the Sydneys, and found herself again shut up in the carriage with Mrs Pelham, that lady's conversational powers certainly did not gain by the comparison.

CHAPTER XVII.

“ I love thee, Twilight ; as thy shadows roll,
The calm of evening steals upon my soul ;
Sublimely tender, solemnly serene,
Still as the hour, enchanting as the scene.
I love thee, Twilight ; for thy gleams impart
Their dear, their dying influence, to my heart ;
When o’er the harp of thought thy passing wind
Awakens all the music of the mind,
And Joy and Sorrow, as the spirit burns,
And Hope and Memory, sweep the chords by turns.”

To escape from the ennui of Mrs Pelham’s tiresome questions, Lady Amelia again had recourse to that storehouse she had discovered in her memory ; and while she repeated, with scarcely any perception of their beauty, lines full of feeling and heaven-taught poesy, Lady Amelia was at liberty to gaze unmolested on one of those beautiful skies which sometimes gild the horizon of Edinburgh at summer eve. Upon their arrival at the Marquis of Vainall’s, they found the house lighting up for one of their frequent parties ; and, in great trepidation lest she should be too late, Mrs Pelham hastily betook herself to her toilette. The party was brilliant ; everybody came that should

have come, and some stars of fashion walked in who were not expected ; in short, all the world was there, and all the world seemed pleased with themselves and with all the world. The Marquis and Marchioness were both in high good humour. Good-humoured people are subject to fits of good humour without any ostensible cause, as ill-tempered people take fits of ill temper without being able to assign any reason. It was in one of those bursts of good humour which spread a sunshine over the at all times good-humoured face of the Marquis, that Lady Amelia sat down by him.—“ Well, my good girl,” said he, patting her on the shoulder, “ how did you like your dinner at the Sydneys ?”

“ I liked it very much,” said she ; “ but I expect to like where I am invited to-morrow even better.”

“ Indeed ! Where is that, my love ?”

“ To the good Mrs Miller’s—where I hope, my dear papa, you will allow me to drink tea.”

The Marquis felt that he should frown and refuse, but he was too happy in his present state ; he could not bear the thoughts of discomposing himself, especially about such a trifle ; he therefore contented himself with saying, “ I understand Mrs Miller is a great fool ; but if you choose to drink tea with her, that is your affair, not mine.”

“ Ah ! papa, do not call her a fool ; she is a good and charming woman, and you are very good to al-

low me to drink tea with her. Remember you have promised, and must not draw back."

"No, no," said the Marquis; "yet stay—perhaps she is one of those Dr Pelham might not approve of your associating with."

"Never mind Dr Pelham," cried she; "he is surely not your tutor now, papa."

Her father laughed, and gave her his hand. Lady Amelia having gained her point, felt her heart light, and joined a quadrille party, much to the delight of her father.

"Amelia is really a pretty girl," remarked he to Dr Pelham.

"Much too pretty for a Methodist," said the Doctor; "but I see Mrs Markwell waiting for us to make up the rubber."

"She shall not wait long," said the Marquis, whose heart and soul were all alive to the pleasures of the card-table, and whose passions had their ebbs and flows according as the fickle goddess smiled or frowned. Miss Whinge made the fourth; and the party were soon so engrossed with their game, that the noise and bustle of the music and the dancers were heard not, felt not—they turned not, they moved not, they looked not round, but gazed eagerly on the board. And this is pleasure so called; and to forsake it, one of the *sacrifices* religion exacts from her votaries! It says to them, forsake the pleasure

of wearing out your minds and bodies, and wasting your time in heated suffocating rooms, in pursuit of frivolous amusements which can lead to no profit, and at best serve no other purpose than that of passing the time. Forsake the ball, where the noise and heat distract you—where the conversation is silly and trifling, and the whole, to a thinking mind, stale, flat, and unprofitable. Avoid the theatre, which, to say no worse, holds out low standards of virtue, and inculcates a false morality ; avoid the company of those who respect the laws of God only as they are countenanced by men. But commune with your own heart in your chamber at the silent hour of night—bchold and enjoy the beauties which a bounteous Creator has spread around you. Christ has made you free ! why, then, will you be the slaves of custom, which many of you complain of as shackles ? Choose the company of Christians—with them you will find ease and pleasure ; for charity towards all is in their hearts.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE Marchioness had her whole mind engrossed at present with what she deemed the great concern of life. Suitors had appeared for her two daughters, Ladies Jane and Maria. They were what might be called good matches in point of rank and fortune ; and everything else she deemed would follow of course.—“ Lord Francis, I own, is a little wild,” said she, “ but not more so than a great many other young men, and we must make allowance for him—when once settled, I am sure he will make a good husband. Some people think Sir Adolphus’s not going to church is an objection, but that will come in good time—a wife’s example has a great effect in these matters ; and besides, as Dr Sweetly says, the unbelieving husband shall be converted by the believing wife. So, upon the whole, I think I have great reason to rejoice, that I am likely to see my daughters so well and suitably disposed of. Highborne Park is a charming place ; and Maria is so good-hearted, I am sure she will be much liked.”

Part of these felicitations were addressed to Lady

Gertrude Noble one, whose natural mind, whose natural taste, whose natural powers, and whose standard of right and wrong, were all far above the Marchioness of Vainall's. She knew that happiness consisted not in grandeur; and that riches, beyond a competency, added not to comfort or respectability, but in the eyes of the vulgar. Genius, talents—these were her idols. She, therefore, looked upon the selected husbands of the Marchioness's daughters with a contempt she took little pains to conceal; for she possessed not that spirit which “despiseth no man.” When the Marchioness, therefore, communicated to her as her friend the prospects she had for her daughters, the only answer she could make was, “I am glad you are satisfied.”

“Cold, unfeeling stoic,” thought the Marchioness; “I daresay she is disappointed she has not got them for her own two awkward dowdies.” But in this conjecture she was quite mistaken. Lady Gertrude would have greatly preferred the penniless Mr Witsir, whose talents she justly considered would lead to more true dignity, than the empty title, and great connexions, of Lord Francis, or the fine house, and extensive domain, of Sir Adolphus.

Mrs Miller's opinion on the subject differed materially from the sentiments of both these ladies.—“Can one hope for the continuance of the love of one who

knows not how to love his God ? Whence can the certainty of the existence of moral duties be derived but from Christianity ? God grant my daughter may never think of marrying a man, who would pretend to love her more than he loves his God ! Yet in this, as in all other points, I know, if she is a Christian, she will be directed."

When the Marchioness of Vainall's mind found any thing sufficiently important to occupy it, all lesser objects faded away as inconsiderable, and mingled with the mass of what are termed things of course ; and, as one of those things of course, she heard with cool indifference of Lady Amelia's appointment to drink tea with Mrs Miller.

Dr Pelham made an attempt to rouse the family from the torpor they seemed sinking into on this point ; but in vain. Religion was not a prime mover in the family ; it was not a matter of sufficient importance to excite much zeal either for or against, except when there was nothing else to think of ; and at this time it held a very secondary place. The Marchioness had too much to do buying laces, ordering dresses, hiring servants, &c., &c., to let Lady Amelia's new-fangled notions of faith and practice trouble her head.

Amongst the visitors at her father's house, Lady Amelia felt conscious there were several who would gladly have succeeded Nabob Mammon as candidates

for her hand ; but she so contrived that no proposals ever reached the Marquis's ear, and thus prevented all persecution. She was one whose heart, had it not been restrained by religion, would have been romantic in her attachments ; but love, her better principles had taught her, was of a nature too engrossing for a Christian—too much calculated to draw the mind from God, and to lead its captives to love the creature more than the Creator. But as yet this snare was not amongst her temptations ; for her admirers were men of fortune, without any of those personal attractions, those nameless graces, those fascinating manners, those interesting circumstances, and, above all, without the semblance even of high-souled virtue to ensnare her judgment. These, and such as these, would have been snares for her ; but we are never tried above what we are able to bear ; and her hour of strong temptation was not yet arrived ; because she was not yet strong in faith—that powerful shield by which the Christian is enabled to repel the darts of the Evil One.

CHAPTER XIX.

“And ever more himself with comfort feedes,
Of his own vertues and praise-worthye deeds.”

Fairy Queen.

MR GEORGE SYDNEY, the heir apparent of Beauideal, was distinguished by the grace of his appearance, the elegance of his manners, and his highly cultivated mind. He was a frequent visitor at the Marquis of Vainall's, and soon discovered that Lady Amelia Truefeel possessed a soul more refined, and feelings more congenial to his own, than the other females of the family. And Lady Amelia, on her part, soon discerned that but on one point they ever could differ ;—but that was an important one.

He held in reverence Dr Sweetly's religious code, and decried that of Mr Mansfield. Their frequent conversations led them mutually to wish for more complete union of sentiment ; and the hope of attaining this, led in its turn to still more frequent conversations.

Likings or attachments are sometimes formed without the consent of the judgment of either party. Mr Sydney imperceptibly felt *his* daily increasing towards Lady Amelia. He was much too honourable to wish to deceive her as to his religious opinions ; and acted too much upon the faith he professed, to have his mind fully made up as to the propriety of uniting himself to one whose principles and modes of acting he must, consistently with his own principles, condemn. The admiration they mutually felt was soon perceived by the lynx eye of the Marchioness ; and according to her usual policy, she formed scheme upon scheme, and plan upon plan, to bring it to more than one of those ordinary flirtations, whose rise and fall she had lived to deplore, in the sad experience of herself and friends.

Mr Sydney was constantly at the Marquis's ; and, by accident or design, constantly seated by Amelia. She was young, and naturally affectionate ; she was romantic, and enthusiastic ; and love, with all its fancied and real power, would certainly have ruled her mind ; but such is the overwhelming force of strong religious feeling, that in a great measure it subdues the power of other passions, and confers comparative freedom on the hearts and souls of its votaries.

The experienced reader will have observed, that Lady Amelia was far from having made great attain-

ments in religion ;—yet upon the light she had received, she conducted herself most conscientiously.

“ If Mr Sydney should think of marrying me,” thought she, “ alas I could not consent ; he would draw me aside from my duty, and my happiness would be shipwrecked.” Yet she sighed when she reflected how much on every other point she felt his to be a kindred mind.

The enemies of Christianity seem, sometimes, without intending it, constrained to proclaim its truths.

“ The risk a man runs,” said Dr Pelham one day, “ in uniting himself to one of those Methodists, is incalculable ; for I have always observed, that where the smallest particle of these principles exists, it invariably increases, but is never extinguished.”

“ ’Tis too true,” thought Mr Sydney with a sigh. He was an amiable man ; he had been well brought up ; he had never committed any glaring sin ; yet such is the “ natural enmity of man against the things of God,” that though Mr Sydney’s good taste led him to admire the thousand beauties of character he daily perceived in Lady Amelia, which in reality sprung from her religious principles, yet he reprobated that blessed root from which the whole grew up. “ How different she is from her mother and sisters,” thought he—they were indeed free from either

religious, or any other kind of enthusiasm ;—" but Amelia is a Methodist ; and there is a medium, a happy medium, which my wife must possess."

Lady Amelia often sickened, when condemned to mix with the society that frequented her father's house. The conversation of worldlings is all alike ; the little concerns of little men engross their thoughts and conversation. Lady Amelia felt no interest but in the conversation of the benevolent. Her attention had learned to wander, when the Marchioness gave a dissertation on the mode of conducting a rout. When Mrs Pelham discoursed upon silks and satins—when her sisters described the airs and manners of their fashionable friends—when her father talked of his estates, his politics, his luck at cards—when Dr Pelham held forth upon moderation, tithes, and church preferment,—her mind sometimes ventured to soar upon the all important inquiry of—what is Truth ? But Mr Sydney usually recalled her to the things of time ; he talked of poetry, of music, of painting, of general literature ; and with enthusiasm of the high exaltation of human reason, of human virtue ; nay, he contrived to talk highly of the grandeur of humility. In one of those bright, those dangerous moments, the door was opened by Tom. " Your Ladyship's chair waits," said he.

" Where are you going ?" said Sydney.

“ I am going to drink tea with Mrs Miller,” replied Lady Amelia.

Sydney’s countenance fell, as with a heavy heart he handed her into the chair.

Mrs Miller’s name was heard by Dr Pelham—It is astonishing how people always contrive to hear, what they ought not.

Dr Pelham was, in general, a little deaf; yet his ears sharpened, and became finely acute, in the reception of sounds, when anything connected with Methodism was related. As Lady Amelia went out of the room, “ he shook his hoary locks,” and turning to the Marquis, “ I need not repeat,” said he, “ my sentiments with regard to Mrs Miller and all her sect; there are few more dangerous characters for Lady Amelia to associate with, in her stage of the disease.”

“ I consented, in an unguarded moment,” said the Marquis; “ and I hope, by your judicious cautions, no bad consequences will ensue. I shall not readily consent to her going again. But, by the way, Mrs Miller is to give her some information about that beggar we all did so much for, and allowed her to patronize.”

“ Apropos of benevolence,” said the Marchioness, turning to Mr Sydney, “ have you heard how Lord John Puff is within these few days?”

“He is much better, I believe.”

“What a good man Dr Purdie must be,” said she ;

“Do you know he goes and spends an hour every forenoon with him, reading the newspapers, and telling him all the chit-chat ? He also, to my certain knowledge, gave twenty pounds out of his own pocket to the poor Handtomouths.”

“Why, my dear,” said the Marquis facetiously, “if he gave it out of other peoples’ pockets, he would be a thief you know.”

“Very good indeed,” said Dr Pelham.

Mr Sydney did not listen with as much enthusiasm as the Marchioness usually excited by this narration ; for his purse-strings were accustomed to be undrawn with even more alacrity than those of the generous Dr Purdie.

The company at present at the Marquis of Vainall’s, were worldly people, who practically deny Christianity, yet nevertheless hope to be saved by their good works—and actually to go to Heaven with a catalogue of their good qualities in their hands.

The Marquis trusted chiefly to his justice and truth.

The Marchioness to her temperance and decorum.

Dr Pelham, to his moderation and freedom from enthusiasm.

Lady Jane, to her obedience to her parents.

Lady Maria, to her good temper.

Mrs Pelham, to her care of her dogs—which she called humanity.

And, Mr Sydney, to his general observance of all moral duties ; and failing *quantum sufficit* therein, to the supply of his short-coming by Christ.

In pursuance, therefore, of his principles, the Marquis told Dr Pelham, that, having promised Lady Amelia permission to drink tea with Mrs Miller, he could not withdraw his consent.

“ You know,” says he, “ I never break my word ;” and emotions of modest virtue brought the colour to his countenance, which glowed with the consciousness of rectitude, and undoubting self-satisfaction.

CHAPTER XX.

“ O Thou, whose power o’er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling Man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine ;
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end !”

LADY AMELIA, having left this company of self-satisfied saints, soon found herself at Mrs Miller’s, to meet the renouncers of self-righteousness,—the humble yet hoping christian sinners.

Yet let not the ignorant reader imagine, that in a party of about twenty, there were no wolves in sheep’s clothing. Alas ! “ all are not Christ’s who are called by his name ;” and even in the assemblies of the just, there is a mixture of tares among the wheat.

Lady Amelia was introduced to the company, which consisted of Mr and Mrs Mansfield, the two Miss Pilgrims, the Rev. Peter Sift-the-matter, Mr Thomas Changed, Mr Chimein, Mrs Timeabout, the Miss Meeks, Miss Spotless, Colonel Faithful, Mrs and the Misses Daylight, &c. &c. All these

were Christians, who were reported to have come out from the world ; and some of them were Christians indeed. Their manners were agreeable, for they had put away all wrath, and malice, and evil speaking ; and Lady Amelia felt as if she breathed in a purer air than that which was inhaled at the Marchioness's parties.

She was introduced to all the company, and amongst the rest to Mr Mansfield.

The pleasing expression of his countenance, and the mildness of his manners, never failed to excite the admiration of all who were in his company, and to impress them with a favourable idea of that religion of which he was so fair a specimen. This company were by no means all members of the same visible church, but they agreed on the grand, leading essential doctrine of Christianity,—“ Christ the way, the truth, and the life.”

The conversation turned much upon Missions, and Missionaries, and news from foreign parts, and literature in general ; and many an interesting anecdote was related—and to the pleased ear of Lady Amelia, time flew on eagle's pinions.

The conversation by some unseen direction, turned upon the Theatre ; and Lady Amelia to her great surprise, for the first time, heard this amusement reprobated, as totally unbecoming a professor of Chris-

tianity. At the bare mention of it, Mrs Time-about shuddered. She had more zeal than wisdom, and was apt to express all her sentiments in rather too forcible language. She saw but a small part of everything, and thought no one could see more. She was of course sometimes right in her conclusions, but oftener in the wrong ; but right or wrong, she certainly meant well. Unfeigned horror was depicted upon her visage at the mention of toleration to the Theatre.—“ How,” said she, “ can one be a Christian, yet witness such scenes, and support such characters, and waste time and money in sanctioning and encouraging vice ?”

Lady Amelia blushed and was silent, almost afraid she would be detected, as a frequenter of such scenes of iniquity. She had hitherto been in the habit of attending the theatre ; and she thought the time that was *thus* spent in the company of worldlings more profitably employed, than when she partook their home amusements, and listened to their idle conversation. When Mrs Gossip and Lady Faddle dined with them, she felt that of two evils she chose the least, in accompanying them to the theatre.

Cards, balls, and similar amusements, were all brought under the same, or nearly the same anathemas.

Mr Chimein said, that, for his part, much as he respected the opinions of Evangelical Christians, yet

he could see no harm in innocent amusements ; and that he thought, that such hindrances thrown in the way of Christians, deterred many from becoming advocates for the doctrines of grace.

Lady Amelia unconsciously drew her chair near to his. She thought him a sensible man.

Mrs Daylight, who was esteemed a very sensible woman, said, that she had always considered the excess of these amusements, as the point where their sin began ; that for her part she had no relish for them, but feared she was often worse employed ; that she remembered, when young, often denying herself these, and similar amusements, that she might have the money in reserve, to bestow upon charitable purposes.

Mrs Miller said, she had long been of opinion, that charity, or relieving the distressed, was a virtue that, of all others, a Christian should carefully cultivate, as it drew after it so many others in its train. What charitable person, for example, would bestow either much money or time upon selfish amusements, when there were so many demands of the poor upon both ?

Lady Amelia would fain have heard Mr Mansfield's opinions upon these subjects ; but in this, as in many other societies, the most willing speakers were by no means the best calculated for haranguing. But he at last felt himself called upon to speak, lest he should be thought to acquiesce in the accommoda-

ting doctrines of Mr Chimein, who frequently appealed to him to second some of his assertions.

“The life of a Christian,” said Mr Mansfield, meekly, “is by no means so easily led, as many lukewarm Christians imagine. The great Author of our most Holy Religion made no idle assertion, when he told his disciples, ‘That they should be hated and persecuted for his name’s sake.’”

“Ah !” interrupted Mr Chimein, “these assertions, or, to speak more properly, these prophecies, were applicable only to the early ages of Christianity.”

“In some particulars they were so,” said Mr Mansfield ; “but our Saviour, who knew what was in man, was aware how often this would be used as a subterfuge to favour accommodating doctrines ; and, therefore, there are innumerable warnings given, and they are fenced from all but wilful misinterpretation.—‘What I say unto you, I say unto all,—Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat ; but I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not.’—Let us all watch and pray,” continued Mr Mansfield, “for, be assured, our enemies within and without are not idle.”

“But we are desired by the Apostle Paul, to be all things to all men,” said the still unvanquished Mr Chimein.

“ True,” replied Mr Mansfield ; “ but if any one will give an attentive perusal to the writings of that great Apostle you quote, surely he will not assert, that St Paul gives the smallest room for believing, that he was a favourer of worldly amusements. Christianity hath but one spirit ; and that is one of self-denial ; doubtless there is a possibility that this spirit may even, in some degree, be carried into worldly amusements ; yet, ‘ if any man love the world,’ our Saviour hath declared that, ‘ The love of the Father is not in him.’—Oh !” continued Mr Mansfield, laying his hand upon the Bible,—“ Let each of us take this blessed book for our guide ; and let us pray with deep humility, that our Saviour may send the Holy Spirit to enlighten its pages, and impress upon our minds the sacred truths it contains.”

Mr Chimein felt loath to leave the world, whose cause he had undertaken, in the lurch ; but he felt much at a loss to support his arguments by Scripture. “ Use the world as not abusing it,” was one of his favourite quotations ; he said much of his own on this point, and talked long and fluently, but not deeply. But as it would neither be instructive nor entertaining, we shall not insert it all here. Mr Mansfield’s answers convinced the company that Mr Chimein was no match for him in reasoning, or in arguments drawn from the Scriptures.

Mr Chimein therefore took refuge in what he

reckoned a conclusion replete with wisdom and good sense.

“ Surely,” said he, addressing Mr Mansfield, “ there is enough in the Bible that we may all comprehend, without puzzling our brains about passages quite inexplicable.”

“ Puzzling,” replied Mr Mansfield, “ will not, as you observe, unveil truths that God alone inspired, and will reveal how, when, where, and to whom he will. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? But how shall mortals presume to say that Scripture was written in vain, because they do not understand it? And how can they hope to understand it, when the means it prescribes for this purpose they entirely omit? ‘ Search the Scriptures,’ and though none of it is written in vain, yet many nominal Christians content themselves with partial selections, which they read without prayer, and without meditation; they confine themselves, for example, to the Sermon on the Mount; even there omitting texts whose meaning to them is obscure, and setting aside the spiritual meaning of the whole. How can such men hope to know the will of God? Even the laws of mankind are unintelligible to those who take no trouble to understand them.

“ They who do not seek, shall not find. They who do not knock, to them the door shall not be open-

ed. True, the grace of God is powerful and free. It can change their hard hearts, subdue the pride of human understanding, and teach their humbled spirits to cry out, ‘ Lord, thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes ! for so it seemed good in thy sight.’ But, alas ! alas ! men do not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved.

“ They pillage from the altar of Jehovah, to burn the sacrifice at the shrine of their own wisdom ; they abstract the coin of Heaven, and proudly stamp it with the image and superscription of reason.”

Lady Amelia now felt a little of her natural timidity wearing off, and, in a low voice, ventured to ask Mr Mansfield, if he really thought it wicked of a Christian to frequent the theatre ?”

“ In its present state, I do think it inconsistent with Christian character,” said he. “ Were the theatre ever to become even moral, we might then think differently. But how can a Christian love the scenes there ordinarily represented ? I have no doubt there are many in whose hearts the great change is begun, who still frequent the theatre, as there are many with unchanged hearts who would not enter it, who ‘ make clean only the outside of the cup and platter.’

“ But we must judge leniently,” continued he, with a pitying look to Lady Amelia. “ We have a merciful, yet a just Judge, to deal with.—‘ To him that

knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is evil.' ”

“ I have always thought,” said Mrs Feelwell, “ that it is unnecessary to discuss these things at all. Where the heart is changed, its pleasures are likewise changed ; and people will soon forsake what they have no pleasure in.”

“ What possible harm can there be in a good play ? ” said Miss Prudence Pilgrim.

“ None certainly in a *good play*,” said Mr Peter Sift-the-matter.

“ I see you think there are none such,” replied Miss Hope Pilgrim.

“ There is nothing in this world where sin doth not mingle,” replied he ; “ but there are some places where virtue in every shape seems excluded ; to which class I cannot deny that I consider the theatre as belonging.”

“ Oh,” said Mr Thomas Changed, “ who can read or witness some of the present theatrical publications without feeling his blood curdle with horror ? ”

“ But, Mr Changed,” said Mrs Meek, “ few have dipped so deeply in theatrical excesses as you did at one period.”

“ I own it with shame.”

“ I may say I never was at a bad play,” said Miss Spotless. “ I always reckoned them wicked, and held them in abhorrence ; but there are many which I

have seen whose tendency was to virtue's side—such as Shakespeare's historical plays.”

“ I perfectly agree with you,” said Mr Chimein ; “ I think I have been absolutely the better of them.”

Mrs Mansfield said, “ she feared all the virtue taught at the theatre was, to say the best, but heathen virtue ; and the humble, sinful, self-denying Christian, was not a character likely to be exhibited or much admired upon the stage.”

“ And even if it could be so,” said Miss Spotless, “ it might be termed ‘ casting pearls before swine—’ at all events, to the general run of a London audience.”

Colonel Faithful said, that if there could be a reformed theatre, he would give it his sanction.

“ And I also,” said Mr Mansfield ; “ but, at the same time, I reckon it next to impossible ; and we have no reason to expect that it will ever be one of the instruments made use of to propagate Christianity, or to sanctify those who are already called. But let us not talk to Christians on these non-essentials ; let us all be careful to be found at our posts—not loving the world, nor the things of the world ; but using it as not abusing it.”

“ That old author Francis Quarles, has some pretty lines on this subject,” said Mrs Miller.

The company did not seem to be acquainted with them. Mrs Miller, at their united request, repeated

them, in a manner not inferior to many who have studied from the models of a Kemble or a Siddons. Elegant reading is not confined solely to the frequenters of a theatre, thought Lady Amelia.

The lines were upon the seventy-third Psalm, twenty-fifth verse.

“ Whom have I in heaven but thee ! and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee ! ”

“ I love, and have some cause to love, the Earth—
She is my Maker's creature, therefore good ;
She is my mother, for she gave me birth ;
She is my tender nurse, she gives me food ;—
But what's a creature, Lord, compared with Thee ?
Or what's my mother or my nurse to me ?

“ I love the Air, her dainty sweets refresh
My drooping soul, and to new sweets invite me.
Her shrill-mouth'd choir sustain me with their flesh,
And with their Polyphonian notes delight me.
But what's the air, or all the sweets that she
Can bless my soul withal, compared with Thee ?

“ I love the Sea, she is my fellow-creature,
My careful purveyor, she provides me store ;
She walls me round, she makes my diet greater,
She wafts my treasure from a foreign shore.
But, Lord of Oceans, when compared with Thee,
What is the Ocean or her wealth to me ?

“ To Heaven's high city I direct my journey,
Whose spangled suburbs entertain mine eye,
Mine eye, by contemplation's great attorney,
Transcends the crystal pavement of the sky.
But what is Heaven, great God, compared with Thee ?
Without Thy presence, Heaven's no Heaven to me.

“ Without Thy presence, Earth gives no refection ;
 Without Thy presence, Sea affords no treasure ;
 Without Thy presence, Air 's a rank infection ;
 Without Thy presence, Heaven itself no pleasure.
 If not possess'd, if not enjoy'd in Thee,
 What's Earth, or Sea, or Air, or Heaven to me ?

“ The highest honours that the world can boast,
 Are subjects far too low for my desire ;
 The brightest beams of glory, are at most
 But dying sparkles of Thy living fire.
 The proudest flames that earth can kindle, be
 But mighty glow-worms, if compared to Thee.

“ Without Thy presence, wealth are bags of cares ;
 Wisdom but folly, joy, disquiet, sadness ;
 Friendship is treason, and delights are snares ;
 Pleasures but pains, and mirth but pleasing madness.
 Without thee, Lord, things be not what they be,
 Nor have their being when compared with Thee.

“ In having all things, and not Thee, what have I ?
 Not having Thee, what have my labours got ?
 Let me enjoy but Thee, what farther crave I ?
 And having Thee alone, what have I not ?
 I wish nor sea, nor land, nor would I be
 Possess'd of Heaven, Heaven unpossess'd of Thee.”

It being now about nine o'clock, Mrs Miller's domestics were called in, and Mr Mansfield read and expounded a chapter of the Bible. They then all knelt while he prayed. Afterwards they sang to a small organ, while Mrs Miller adapted one of Mozart's most beautiful airs to sacred words.

Some of their voices were very fine ; and Lady Amelia, who had attended a late musical festival, doubted if she had heard anything which had de-

lighted her more. Lady Amelia's carriage being announced, she bid them good night, and departed, much delighted and impressed with what she had heard.

When she returned home, she found the party at the Marquis's engaged at cards—some of them muttering strange oaths. At the same time, had any one charged them with this guilt, they would have disclaimed the imputation as an infamous slander. The change from the scene she had left struck her forcibly, and she retired to her chamber in a more serious musing mood than she had ever before experienced.

CHAPTER XXI.

“WELL,” said the Marquis next morning at breakfast, “well, Amelia, what news from the Saints? tell us all and all about it, and what they said of us sinners.”

“Amelia is too good a girl, to tell tales out of school,” said the Marchioness.

“I’ll warrant her,” said Dr Pelham, with a sneer.

“Lady Amelia will tell us just what she ought to tell, and no more,” said Mr Sydney, who happened to be there that morning.

“I neither saw nor heard anything,” said Lady Amelia, “which I ought to conceal;” and she related the names of the company, and a part of the conversation. The Marquis and Mr Sydney looked grave. “How did they sing?” asked the ladies.

“How were they dressed?” said Mrs Pelham.

“They would have a merry-making after they got quit of you,” said Dr Pelham, with his usual scornful laugh; “I know their tricks to take in young creatures.”

“ But what kind of quizzes are they ?” said the Marquis ; “ Is Mr Mansfield anything of a dandy ?”

Lady Amelia looked grave, but endeavoured to answer their numerous queries in the best manner she could.

“ And what did Mrs Miller say of Saint Widow Bell ?” asked the Marquis.

“ Why, she said,” replied Lady Amelia, “ that she would be visited by the Clothing Society, and relieved, if found worthy ; and she begged, as I was young and inexperienced in the ways of beggars, that I would do nothing more for her till her real character was thoroughly ascertained. From some circumstances, she much feared the woman would appear to be totally unworthy.”

“ That woman Miller would be by no means a fool, if she were not a Methodist,” said the Marquis.

“ I assure you she is not a Methodist, papa,” said Lady Amelia ; “ she sits in the Established Church.”

“ No matter,” said the Marquis, satisfied with his ignorance, and afraid of being bored with information ; “ no matter, ’tis all one.”

“ Established Church indeed !” said Dr Pelham, slowly, and with an accent upon every syllable.

“ But I must insist,” added the Marquis, “ that you obey Mrs Miller, Amelia, and myself at the same time.”

“ And I also add my injunctions,” said the Mar-

chioness, who never allowed the Marquis to forget their copartnery in anything.

And Lady Amelia felt no scruples of conscience in replying without hesitation,—“ You may depend upon my obedience to your desire.”

The Marquis now amused the uninitiated part of the company with the history of all that had been done for Sarah Bell; and concluded, from this specimen, that he was now fully authorized to say, from personal experience, that he knew all beggars to be cheats and knaves; and that he who gave to the poor, instead of lending to the Lord, gave to devils, in the shapes of Sarah Bells, Janet Mackays, Peter Limps, and Davie Donoughts.

Sarah Bell thus found herself cut off from a quarter which promised to bleed so freely; and made nothing farther of this connection, than the advantage of declaring, wherever she went, that Amy was named after Lady Amelia Truefecl,—thereby implying, that an intimacy existed between her and that noble family, which could only have arisen from their knowledge of her respectability and worth.

The Marquis, and all his family, with the exception of Lady Amelia, resolved for the future never to encourage vice, by giving charity in person. They were clearly of opinion, that it was both more pious and more genteel to give their names to charitable subscriptions.

“ Many of the princes of the blood, and the principal nobility do so,” said the Marchioness.

“ But are you sure they also pay ?” said Dr Pelham, with a satirical grin.

“ I will by no means answer for that,” said the Marquis.

The Marquis of Vainall and his family would as soon have thought of signing a radical address, as subscribing to any Bible Society or Mission whatever ; and in their own minds they made very little distinction between the characters of Leigh Richmond and Leigh Hunt.

The resolution of the Vainall family not to give their money to beggars, where they had no opportunity of becoming acquainted with their characters, was perhaps wise ; for, if people are too indolent to give their time and trouble to make personal inquiries, it is certainly safer to intrust the distribution of their alms to those who count no labour trouble, no toil a weariness, in the exercise of that justly popular Christian grace, benevolence.

Lady Amelia, as usual, joined her mother’s party at the play. There, a new train of ideas entered into her mind ; and the opinions she had so lately heard at Mrs Miller’s seemed to acquire new force from all she saw and heard. She became absent and abstracted. In vain did Kean beat upon his breast ; in vain did he call aloud—“ A horse, a horse ! my kingdom

for a horse !" Subjects far more interesting had possession of her mind, and meaner feelings faded away. The gay scene around her, the crowded boxes, had no effect in arresting her attention. A mind that had tasted of heavenly musing, and been elevated and enlarged by the views of eternity, could not muse long on feathers and flowers, and beaux and belles, in whose *dandy* dresses the most lamentable certificates of folly were inscribed.

“ Oh ! would the fairest of mortal kind
Aye keep the holy truths in mind,
That kindred spirits their motions see,
Who watch their ways, with anxious ee,
And grieve for the guilt of humanity !”

Much passed through her mind, while her eye gazed without interest on “ the mirror of nature.”

“ What shall I do ?” thought she ; “ my heart tells me that I ought to give up this amusement ; yet my father will oppose me, my mother will oppose me—I dare not disobey them—What shall I do ?”

“ What a charming rational amusement the theatre is,” said Mr Sydney, as the curtain dropped, almost without Lady Amelia perceiving it. Mr Sydney, who was, as usual, seated beside her, had again to repeat his observation before she heard him. “ Her fine feelings have been too much affected by what she has seen,” thought he ; “ when people do not weep, it is because they have been too deeply affected for tears.”

No tear had wet Lady Amelia's cheek—her countenance was marked with melancholy and perplexing thought. She seemed to be moved, or rather unmoved, and different from all the other spectators.

“ That last scene was very fine indeed,” said the Marquis.

“ Quite electrifying,” said Mr Sydney, to the box in general.

“ 'Tis too much,” uttered the Marchioness, who had the vulgarity to blow her nose.

“ 'Tis too much,” said Lady Maria, who wiped away no tears with an elegant French handkerchief.

“ 'Tis extremely hot,” said Lady Jane, who poured a little *eau de mille fleurs* on one still more elegant.

“ Shall we stay the entertainment ?” said a little Miss in the front row.

“ I do not intend it,” said the Marchioness.

“ Oh, what a pity !” said the little girl ; “ so I shall not see this charming farce.”

Lady Amelia, whose ears were ever open to the tone of entreaty, besought her mother to consent, in order to please little Patty Gadabout.

“ Indeed, Mrs Gadabout may take charge of her own children,” said the Marchioness ; “ I have no idea of wearing out my constitution for their amusement. If the carriage is come, I certainly go. Captain Backrow, will you inquire if my carriage waits ?”

The Captain flew, and Patty Gadabout's heart went pit-a-pat with hope and fear. The Captain returned, and by an expressive shake of the head intimated to the Marchioness that the carriage was not come. The Marchioness drew up her head and flirted her fan, and Patty's spirits revived. Lady Amelia seemed also awakened from her reverie.

“What a charming amusement the theatre is,” again repeated Mrs Sydney.

“I think there are worse amusements, and there may also be better,” replied Lady Amelia, blushing, conscious of what had been passing in her mind—‘*Ce ne que le premier pas qui coute*,’—for, summoning quickly more courage, she continued—“Were it not for displeasing my parents, I think I would not come again to a theatre.”

Mr Sydney was really shocked to hear, what he deemed such illiberal sentiments; for he could not doubt to what cause to ascribe her dislike to so very fascinating an amusement. He endeavoured to eradicate by argument these ignoble principles, which, he justly conceived, had become stronger since her visit to Mrs Miller.

But how feeble are the words of mere human wisdom, when contending with principles which the grace of the Almighty has imparted, and which his wisdom and power will cherish and protect. Lady Amelia had begun to think for herself, and to try her actions by

the rule of the word of God. Those alone, therefore, who could answer her from that blessed book, could have any influence over her. Much she thought, much she ruminated, much she prayed; and at last, weary of conjectures, doubts, and fears, she boldly ventured to call for Mrs Miller, and through her means procured a private interview with Mr Mansfield, to whom she opened all her mind.

He expressed great commiseration for the trials which he saw now awaited her. He directed her to look with a single eye for instruction to the word of God, and to pray, believing that she would receive that knowledge for which she prayed, through the merits and intercession of her Saviour.

He said that he could not, however painful it might be, refuse to declare to her the truths of the Scripture, and to remind her that she must be firm in obeying what she conceived to be the commands of God, in preference to those of her parents—if disagreement between these authorities should unhappily arise. “But, above all things,” said he, “be watchful to please, honour, and obey them, in every other point.” The conversation was deeply interesting to her, and lasted for a considerable time. He expressed himself also decidedly against matrimonial connexions between Christians and unbelievers. “But at the same time let us be cautious in judging,” said he—“God alone knoweth the hearts of men.” Lady Amelia

started and sighed, she scarce knew why—the thought of George Sydney crossed her mind.

All that Mr Mansfield said, made a deep and lasting impression upon her. She was approaching to that frame of mind so usual with young converts, of regarding the human beings, who have been the means of instructing them, as nearly infallible ; and she looked with a kind of idolatrous veneration upon Mr Mansfield. “ Were I to be often with such a man,” thought she, “ I would surely be all that is right. Let me be thankful—I have now found a faithful counsellor in all my difficulties.”

Lady Amelia had yet to learn that the only infallible guide is the Word of God—that the only infallible interpreter is the Holy Spirit ; and that He is faithful who has promised its assistance to all who seek it earnestly by prayer.

George Sydney was daily making rapid advances in her good graces. His attentions to her were very marked. There was a something that attracted him towards her ; and yet, the difference of their sentiments almost made her tremble to investigate the state of her affections. Akin to this, was what was passing in his mind with regard to her.

“ I like her society,” thought he, “ but I never shall fall in love with a woman so enthusiastic on a subject so important as religion.” They were both guarded ; but Lady Amelia sometimes felt a little

piqued, when she reflected how little necessary were precautions on her part ; for Mr George Sydney was not either in profession or appearance her lover. But they were much together, and they thought much of each other ; and the Marquis and Marchioness, and others who had eyes, and used them, were of opinion that time would bring about a declaration on his part, and a little time longer acceptance upon hers.

CHAPTER XXII.

LITTLE Amelia Bell continued to thrive to a wonder ; and Lady Amelia, moved by a penitential letter from Sarah, went to see the child ; being for the present indulged with full liberty to go where she would.

Tuesday being the day of the meeting of the Clothing Society, Mrs Miller, according to promise, went to hear the result of the inquiries respecting Sarah Bell, of whom she augured no good. The Clothing Society has existed for several years ; and, like most other societies, has its friends, and its foes. Some say that it encourages indolence and vice—that its visitors are frequently deceived ; and, consequently, the worthless often relieved.

The Society is composed of ladies, who are all apparently actuated by Christian principle ; and, to obviate the objections we have alluded to, very strict rules are enjoined to be observed, in visiting and examining into the cases. But the enemies thereupon shifted their ground ; and now alleged, that the severity and strictness of the rules were so excessive, that no person, whose conscience demanded an ad-

herence to truth, could possibly recommend any pauper to the Society's beneficence, as it was to be questioned if the town of Edinburgh, or any town in the world, afforded such specimens of amiable, virtuous indigence, as the objects designated by the rules of the Society. But, notwithstanding all that could be said against it, the Society continued to prosper ; and, during the severe months of winter, many a sick-bed was covered, and many a naked wretch was clothed.

Mrs Miller was merely a subscriber to this Society ; but she was well acquainted with its members and its rules. She saw its evils—but thought that the good it produced greatly preponderated over them. And where is evil excluded from mixing in the transactions of this world ? Were none but the righteous entitled to wear clothes, the rich man, as well as the poor, would soon be condemned to go naked. But to attain to the real knowledge of character is no easy matter ; even were there a window on the hearts of men, their fellow mortals would mistake as to what was good or evil. “ Here,” in all things, “ we see through a glass darkly.”

When Mrs Miller arrived at the Society, she found the visitors, as usual, assembled in a room, shaping and stitching petticoats, wrappers, caps, &c., while they waited to be called into the adjoining room, where the managers sat in judgment on the cases which had been investigated and reported for their in-

spection. Mrs Miller went into this justiciary court, and having shaken hands with her friends, she waited to hear Sarah Bell's fate decided. Sarah herself, and a variety of other wretched mendicants, stood waiting in a separate apartment, to know what they were to receive. All seemed conscious of innocence, and, consequently, in full expectation of having themselves and families clothed from head to foot ; though, in general, those whom the visitors had at once rejected as unworthy, did not attend—all remonstrance being notoriously vain. Mrs Miller sat some time, and heard many of the cases discussed. Several were rejected on account of deviation from the prescribed form, which required the subscriber, from personal knowledge, to answer for the moral habits of the pauper.

Mrs Flitteral was the lady who had recommended the case at present before the court. She said she neither could nor would so pledge herself for any one, not even for her own mother ; and that she thought the visitors should be authorized to answer generally for the fitness of the object ; and that for the future she would have nothing to do with such a ridiculous society, but would take her six shillings and buy Jenny Waster a gown herself, without being obliged to write and tell lies for that purpose.

But who can tell how much her tongue thenceforward exerted itself in decrying this Society, and all

Societies of the kind ! She thought that from this trait of resemblance, she was entitled to consider herself as holding in all respects the same religious opinions as Dr Chalmers.

Unfortunately for Sarah Bell, two of the most experienced, severe, or rather hardened visitors, had been selected to investigate her morals. To them whine was like any other sing-song ; and they had been too much accustomed to visit the habitations of the poor, to faint away at wretchedness and sorrow.

And though in the distribution of what in ordinary language might be called their own, they were “ kind to the unthankful and to the evil ;” yet in the management of what belonged to the public, they were scrupulous in applying it only according to the strict rules of the Society ; and forgot their natural character in their desire to do justice. Well would it be if statesmen—if men in office, always acted upon the principles, which governed these two Edinburgh Spinstresses.

But for the instruction of my readers, I shall lay a copy of Sarah Bell’s case before them, as it was read to the ladies directresses of the Society.

“ We visited Sarah Bell, and found her in the greatest poverty. She was left a widow about two years ago ; and has contrived, hitherto, to maintain herself by her industry. But bad health, and the scarcity of work, have now reduced her to beggary. She has

three helpless children, all unable to support themselves, and has no assistance from any society whatever, and has not been relieved by any person except Mrs Miller.

“She has resided twenty years in her present abode, and is a hearer of Mr Mansfield. She shewed us a Bible—None of the neighbours would say either good or bad as to her character, excepting one, who said, “That she was ower weel seen to, and that she spent in whisky what would have maintained many an honest family.” Upon the whole, the visitors were obviously not favourably impressed with Mrs Bell ; but they added, that “she was very urgent, and apparently in great want, and asked a blanket and wrapper for herself, and cloak and shoes to go to church with, and a new Bible. The visitors upon examining her Bible, which she shewed them, are suspicious that it was borrowed for the occasion, being marked with another name. She demanded clothes for all the children. The infant was absolutely naked—the whole appearance of the house dirty and slovenly.”

(Signed)

“DEBORAH PRY,

“RACHEL HEARTALL,

“*Visitors for the Clothing Society.*”

The managers were unanimous in rejecting the application of Sarah Bell, from want of attestations of

character ; and appearances, to say no more, were certainly against her. Mrs Miller was speedily informed of their decision ; and indeed from the very first she had but little hopes of Sarah Bell, and was now confirmed as to the justice of her suspicions, from the fact of Sarah and her family being so destitute of clothing, after the bountiful supplies of Lady Amelia Truefeel.

She therefore called Sarah apart from the crowd of expectants, and having told her the facts against her, she rebuked her in words of truth, which effectually prevented Sarah from replying with her usual falsehoods.

But her heart was untouched ; for what can touch a hardened heart ?

“ I cannot possibly ever give you money again,” said Mrs Miller. “ I am sorry for your boys ; and if you will send them to me, I shall put them to school ; but remember you must keep them in regular attendance, otherwise I shall also give them up. You need not go again to the Marquis of Vainall’s, for you may depend upon it I shall tell Lady Amelia all about you.”

Sarah made some new attempts to deceive, but in vain. Mrs Miller was firm ; for her hopes of Sarah’s amendment were so faint, that they might be called no hopes at all.

“ He that converteth a sinner from the error of

his ways shall save a soul alive, and hide a multitude of sins.' ” This verse often occurred to Mrs Miller. “ I will not forsake this poor wretch entirely,” said she ; “ but I will visit her occasionally, and try to work upon her as God shall direct me.”

She returned into the managers' room, where the cases of many deserving objects were considered, and their wants relieved. There is a mixture among the poor of tares and wheat, as amongst the rich.

We must not presume to examine too curiously into the moral operation of these charitable societies. Those abandoned mendicants, who abuse the fine feelings implanted in Christians for their relief, would probably have gone to greater lengths in vice, if abandoned entirely to its natural consequences.

Superficial observers may ascribe the vice plainly discernible in the lower orders to many blameless causes ; nay, even to the existence of charitable institutions, and the hopes of impunity they hold forth to idleness ; but alas, its seat is more deeply rooted in the soil of a depraved human heart. And after all, why should the poor be ashamed of looking upon a coat or a blanket as a harmless perquisite, when the most superficial observer must acknowledge the scantiness of their supply, and the extremity of their need ? and when the rich, who can scarcely conceive what it is to want clothes and blankets, create for themselves sinecure offices and emoluments, that

they may keep equipages, and drink champagne, and are in reality idle pensioners of a public they pretend to befriend ? Instead of prating about, and lamenting the spirit of dependance in the poor, let the rich shew a better example.

But why need I remonstrate ? What man was ever made better by human invective ? and what sinecure or pension will be given up at my suggestion ?

The strictness of the Clothing Society tends to encourage morality, by making the poor feel the temporal advantages of a good character.

“ If this thing be of man, it will come to nought ; if of God, why fight against it ? ”

CHAPTER XXIII.

LADY DOUBTALL, an English acquaintance of Mrs Miller, who had lately arrived in Edinburgh, met her by appointment at the Clothing Society, and thence proceeded with her to see some of the other charitable institutions. Lady Doubtall had much curiosity, but little benevolence ; she thought talking and doing were the same things. She had already seen the Jail and Bridewell ; and she now proceeded to visit what other establishments were deemed worthy of observation, that she might talk of them, and be perhaps looked upon as another Mrs Fry on her return to London.

Mrs Miller soon penetrated into the character of this lady ; but as her Master's service was ever in her mind, she hoped that what was undertaken in a spirit of idleness, might terminate in something better. She quickly discerned that Lady Doubtall was of a criticizing disposition ; and accordingly, like a judicious angler, she gave the line freely to her prey, and allowed her ladyship's tongue full latitude and longitude in finding faults, for which she could devise no

remedy, and in deciding confidently upon points which would have puzzled the wisest of our legislators.

“What a pity,” said Lady Doubtall, as she walked through the education school, almost deafened with the noise, and eyeing the numerous circles of girls—“What a pity,” said she raising her voice, “to see so many fine girls so ragged and dirty ! The mistress ought certainly to insist upon their all coming well dressed and clean, otherwise she should expell them.”

“Certainly,” said Mrs Miller, smiling, “as you observe, it would be very desirable to have them all well dressed ; and if the mistress’ insisting upon it could attain that point, I have no doubt it would be done. But, as far as having washed hands, if you will examine you will find them tolerable—they are the poorest of the poor, and if you saw the habitations where many of them dwell, you would wonder to see them so well.”

But Lady Doubtall was not to be thus cut short. “Why,” said she, “my school in —— shire, which I superintend myself, is quite different ; and I must confess, I think far superior to yours ; they are all dressed alike, and are as neat as possible.”

“Can they read and write as well ?” asked Mrs Miller, modestly.

“I cannot say precisely as to that particular,” said

Lady Doubtall; "I leave all these matters to Jack Perfite, the schoolmaster; but they look a great deal better,—they are in general the children of decayed tradesmen and farmers."

"I assure you," replied Mrs Miller, "that none of these are by any means born to such exalted stations. I mean to visit some of their dwellings to-morrow, and if you would accompany me, I think you would cease to wonder at the poorness of their appearance."

Lady Doubtall consented; for, though she was often the dupe of false informers, she by no means went into deception with her eyes open.

They next visited the House of Industry, where she was forced to give her unqualified approbation; but, as she reckoned finding fault a proof of knowing what was right, she thought proper to observe, "that if the noise of the spinning wheels, which was so extremely unpleasant, could be avoided, it would be a great improvement."

"If you will invent a noiseless spinning-wheel, and get a patent for it," said Mrs Miller, "I assure you we shall encourage it in all our institutions."

"I must likewise invent a machine for making old women hold their tongues," said Lady Doubtall; "so many of them sitting together must occasion gossiping, which leads to evil communication, and the consequent corruption of good manners." Mrs

Miller said, that there was a governess who always sat beside the younger girls, and read aloud some well selected books for their instruction and amusement.

Mrs Miller now shewed their work, and Lady Doubtall condescended to approve of it, and gave orders for some pieces of lace by way of charity, as it was sold as cheap as possible. While they were examining it, the ladies who superintend this institution came in, and Lady Doubtall was introduced to some of them by Mrs Miller. She admired goodness more in the higher ranks than the lower; and their manners and appearance confirmed Mrs Miller's account of them,—that they were of the first respectability in Edinburgh, and belonged to the highest circles.

Mrs Miller told her, that many idlers had here learnt habits of industry, and blest the day they were admitted.

They next visited the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. This interesting establishment surprised Lady Doubtall very much. How people could talk without tongues, and hear without ears, was indeed an object to excite the curiosity of the most callous. The order that was observed, the wonderful attainments of the children, their theological knowledge, would have put to shame many who have the use of all their faculties. How many united dormant powers, indeed, do all of us possess, both of body and mind !

“This institution, as well as others, has been much indebted to the ladies,” observed Lady Doubtall.

“Or rather, let us give the glory to Him to whom it is due,” said Mrs Miller ; “for it is only as taught by Him from whom all good proceeds, that any good is done ; and nought but the powerful impulse of Christian principle could have made the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.”

“But, Mrs Miller, I cannot help thinking, that ladies who devote so much of their time to out-of-doors occupation, must be likely to neglect those duties which are more immediately their own peculiar calling.”

“When that is the case,” replied Mrs Miller, “we no longer recognize the charity which Christianity inculcates,—‘Whosoever provideth not for his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.’ But as far as my observations go, I would state the contrary as a fact, unless you reckon amongst household duties, making gossiping visits, tormenting shopkeepers by turning over their goods, or sitting at home receiving these said gossips, or embroidering with the needle dresses already too highly ornamented. Depend upon it, madam, these are the only domestic duties that the Christians of my acquaintance neglect ; whereas, when I have been called upon to mingle with the world, I have observed that the

engrossing nature of its pleasures, and its business falsely so called, have interfered with domestic duties entirely. Oh, how often have I thought with feelings of deep regret, Would these worldly characters as conscientiously perform their domestic duties, as those whom they decry for neglecting them, how soon would the sweets of domestic comfort be again restored ! ‘ Domestic happiness, thou only bliss that hast survived the fall,’ thou art slighted by them, not by the Christian.”

Lady Doubtall felt charmed, in spite of her prejudices ; and as she listened to the fine tones and modulations of Mrs Miller’s voice, she gave a kind of tacit acquiescence. Mrs Miller went with her to the Beggar’s Repository, where Lady Doubtall was surprised to find a gentleman busily overlooking the books ; and still more surprised when she heard that he and others, like the ladies, devoted their time to consider the cause of the poor. “ You are certainly all good people in this town,” said Lady Doubtall.

But Mrs Miller dealt too much in truth, to reply to this speech otherwise than by a shake of the head.

Here they saw several old women, who brought their spinning, and received payment. Lady Doubtall remarked, perhaps with some truth,—“ I think it would be better if all these institutions were branches of one another, associated together, and united into one system.”

“ Imperfection is marked upon everything human,” said Mrs Miller ; “ however, I hope in time to see Christians unite in benevolence, as I hope they do in toleration to each other.”

They now took their way to the New Town, to Queen Street, where was a Repository of a different and higher description. The elegance, the neatness, the fancy, displayed in this compendium of female industry, charmed Lady Doubtall, who again opened her charity purse, and purchased an elegant ruff and cap.

Mrs Miller explained to Lady Doubtall the nature of this Repository.—“ Here,” said she, without disclosure of the names, “ many persons, reduced by misfortune, find a sale for their work, and means to procure the comforts of their better days.”

“ Why,” answered Lady Doubtall, “ I daresay many a miss gets a feather to her cap by these means.”

“ I have heard such things alleged against it,” replied Mrs Miller, “ but, I trust, without foundation. I hope the pride of my countrywomen is of a higher description. Pride also leads the unconverted into many a snare ! How many baits does Satan make of silk and lace !”

The exertions and self-denial of the ladies who conduct this Society are but slender, when compared with the sacrifices of those who are engaged in the other institutions we have just visited ; though there

are many here who are also engaged in the meanest offices of charity. But were I to indulge in a fanciful scale for the measurement of Christian virtue, I would say, that its force appears strongest in the Societies for the Sick and the Aged—the Clothing Society, and others of that description. There, scenes are beheld which cannot sooth the feelings, or indulge romance. Next in degree, I would place the House of Industry and the Deaf and Dumb Institution ; and a fainter shade of Christian charity is even perceptible in this receptacle of elegance and industry ; though here, the absence of everything that is disgusting, renders the workings of self-denial less conspicuous.”

Mrs Miller felt herself running into the fault of judging others. “ I am now presuming to do,” said she, “ what I have often reprobated in others ; to speak as if I alone knew the way of doing good, when alas, it is one of the most difficult parts of knowledge. God will certainly bring good, even out of evil ; and a Christian’s highest attainment is to endeavour to know His will as revealed in the Bible, and seek to do it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THERE was a very brilliant party at the Marquis of Vainall's; where Lady Doubtall was not the only stranger. Miss Matilda Sydney, and her cousin, Miss Arabella Treadwell, had arrived to spend some days at the Marquis's house.

Arabella Treadwell had newly *come out*, and was an acknowledged beauty. She was a finished beauty, a conscious beauty, and a real beauty. She had been already much admired by the happy few who had beheld her, before she was displayed to public view. Her love of admiration had grown with her growth, and engrossed her whole soul; and, blind to herself, the soul this beautiful casket contained was but a neglected gem. She had some good feelings; but they were all repressed when her master passion came into play.

She might have been capable of seeking to please, from the benevolent desire of making others happy. But alas, this beauty, which was her idol, undermined, tainted, and spoiled all the best feelings of her heart. She did all in her power to please, because she wished to be admired; and she had the

tact to discover, that even a beauty, if unpleasant in her manners, would not succeed.

The motive of all her actions was the acquisition of admiration ; and she succeeded with many of the vain of the other sex, who claimed hers in return. But Captain Dash, and Henry Fop, and Sir William Shineall, all wore her chains in vain ; their fortunes were limited, and she loved none of them. Her mind was too much engrossed by herself to go out of its own orbit, and though she could discern a handsome man from a plain one, a quiz from a beau, yet she measured men's qualities chiefly by the extent of their admiration for herself. When men were absent, the admiration of the weaker sex was by no means to be despised ; she seemed even to wish that the very brute creation should be struck with her charms—and sometimes allured Cupid from the caresses of Mrs Pelham for that purpose.

Lady Doubtall had some points of character in common with Miss Treadwell. She never had been a decided beauty ; but the love of admiration was also with her a dominant passion, and she had now ceased to attempt the beauty. The agreeable, good-humoured pleasant woman, was too tame for her. She had attempted the genius, but her wings, like Phaeton's, had been singed in the flight. The well-informed woman, who had seen a great deal of the world, the accurate judge of men and manners, places

and things, was her present aim ; and her character was rising in this line. She talked much, and even thought a little of what she had seen with Mrs Miller. It was, in fact, unexplored ground to most of her auditors, and she filled them with wonder at the feats she intended to perform next day, in company with her benevolent friend.

Lady Maria Murphy was also at the dinner-party, and one of the listeners to Lady Doubtall, and one of the admirers of Miss Treadwell ;—for her aim also was to be agreeable, though in a humbler line than either Lady Doubtall or Miss Treadwell ; and her sense, which, though not great, was good, pointed out to her, that to admire other people's qualities, rather than display your own, was the game to pursue in order to be generally agreeable. She contrived, therefore, as much as possible, to give her ears to Lady Doubtall, and her eyes to Miss Treadwell, and her general smile to the whole company.

Amongst the gentlemen was Sir James Sweetly, who sat next the Marchioness, and complimented her on all things which could possibly admit of compliment.—“ This jelly's good, that malmsey's healing.”

Colonel Portly, another of the beaux, was a very agreeable person, who had seen a great deal of the world, had spent much of his life at courts, and consequently was reckoned a well-bred man. Captain

Clatterwell, a pleasant fellow, who had many good jokes of his own, and a ready laugh for those of other people ; and Mr Henry Hackbone, from the country, a very intelligent good listener to all stories, new and old, and all jokes, good and bad, contributed to fill up the party. And there was Mr Scrape-ofall, a great literary character, who happened to be seated next Mrs Pelham. That lady seemed to have some idea that learning was infectious. She therefore drew her chair close to him, and fixed her eyes upon him, and questioned him on the most immaterial points, with as much gravity and earnestness, as if she had been “on reasoning high intent.” But as his aim, for the present, was something else than a mere feast of reason, and was, in truth, nothing else than to feast upon the Marquis’s excellent mutton, he would have gladly postponed profiting by her conversation, at all events till he had dined ; but Mrs Pelham justly concluded that she might not soon have so favourable an opportunity of displaying her acquirements. She therefore attacked him with a violent round of short questions ; preparing her second attack, while he answered the first, as regularly as a soldier loads and fires. But he was a man of quick decision, and having met with and suffered much from such characters before, he bolted suddenly from her persecution, by addressing a deep question to Sir John Wouldbewise, who sat opposite, and contrived to

turn the brunt of Mrs Pelham's artillery in that direction.

Those who are at all acquainted with Edinburgh dinners, will no doubt cordially assent to the proposition, that, with scarcely any exception, they are meetings of a nature calculated to make the frequent participators cry out, "How weary, stale, dull, flat, and unprofitable, seem to me all the uses of this life!"

The conversation in the eating-room is flat and insipid; it increases in said qualities when the ladies ascend to the drawing-room, where common-place remarks, downright stupidity, or ridicule of our neighbours, is the usual entertainment.

They may be endured in the dark months of winter; but in spring, to be tied to a chair, looking at smoaking viands, instead of walking in the fields, listening to the feathered songsters!—"Ah, who can forfeit these, yet hope to be forgiven?"

The Marquis had selected Miss Treadwell and Lady Doubtall as his companions at dinner. Miss Treadwell fed for her complexion, Lady Doubtall for her mind.

The Marquis of Vainall shone more at his own table than anywhere else; he was much accustomed to company, and was naturally hospitable, good-natured, and kind; he liked to see people eat and drink, and would rather hear them laugh than converse. "Laugh and grow fat," was one of his favour-

ite proverbs. He hated to see sorrow and weeping, for he could not extend his social powers so far as "to weep with those who weep."

To furnish food for mirth, he was obliged to tell some stories, and call upon his guests for theirs in return. To be dull was with him a high offence, and no man could be pleasant who did not make him laugh.

"I assure you, Miss Treadwell," said he, "I am very happy to see you here, and hope that you will like Edinburgh so much, that you will not think of leaving us for a long time."

Miss Treadwell bowed gracefully enough. It was not, as usual, overdone. "You are very good indeed," said she.

"And, Lady Doubtall," continued his lordship, "you surely cannot be so cruel as to leave Edinburgh to-morrow? you will stay and go with us to see Kean."

"I certainly shall not go to-morrow," said Lady Doubtall; "for I am to be dragged about by my old friend Mrs Miller, I presume, all over the Cowgate."

"Ha! are you bit also?" said the Marquis.

"What do you mean?" replied she. "I am rather a biter than bit at present, as I am eating your excellent mutton, I had almost said venison."

"Ha, ha, that is very good," said the Marquis;

“ but you surely know that Mrs Miller is a Methodist.”

“ Oh, I know that she is a little wild, but she will do me no harm, I assure you;” and she drew back her head, with an air that said, “ My good sense is shield sufficient, and I am cased against anything foolish or methodistical.”

“ Let us drink a little Burgundy to her reformation,” said the Marquis; “ and afterwards I shall tell you a good story; but I hope Amelia does not hear; you know she is half mad upon these subjects.”

“ No, no, she is too busy flirting with Mr Sydney,” said Lady Doubtall, “ to attend to our gossip.” The Marquis here related, in his happiest manner, the well-known story of Sarah Bell. He added a little every time he told it; and it was now become a very good story.

“ Excellent !” said Miss Treadwell.

“ How very good !” said Lady Doubtall.

“ Very good indeed !” said everybody near him; and everybody laughed; and everybody that could not hear, laughed upon trust.

“ ’Twas indeed monstrous good,” said the Marquis, as the company began to compose themselves, and again resume their knives and forks.

During his story, the heads of one half of the ta-

ble were turned towards the Marchioness, for the company was large.

She, too, had been telling a story; the company shook their heads, in token of admiration, and the words, "Lord John Puff—true benevolence—true charity—DrPurdie—Dean Moderate," &c. &c. broke, at intervals, upon the ear.

"What a bore that story of my mother's is become!" said Lady Jane, in a whisper, to Lady Maria.

"'Tis a beautiful picture of human nature," said Dr Pelham to Lady Maria Murphy, who was seated next him.

"Beautiful indeed!" said she; "these are the proofs of religion."

"What a fine fellow your friend must be!" said Sir James Sweetly to the Marchioness.

"He is indeed a good man," answered her ladyship emphatically.

"Very good, in another sense," was still heard in murmurs from the foot of the table.

A silent pause of admiration took place for about two seconds, till the usual noise of plates and knives was again resumed.

"Allow me to send you some jelly, Lady Maria," said Sir John.

"Pray, may I have the honour of taking a little

wine with you, Miss Treadwell?" said Mr Scrape-ofall.

"May I trouble you for some macaroni?" said Lady Maria Murphy, bowing to Mr Wouldbewise.

"These pies are quite cold!" exclaimed the Marquis, with indignation, as he threw down his knife and fork. "The cook ought to be made to eat them himself. Take them away, Tom."

"'Tis almost impossible," said Mr Scrape-ofall, "to have all things in season, in the present mode of putting down a dinner. As my friend Lord Managewell used to observe, the saying, 'too many *cooks* spoil the broth,' ought to have been converted into 'too many *dishes* spoil the cook.'"

"Very good indeed," said the Marquis.

"To eat with elegance is a science better understood on the continent than in this country," said Mr Wouldbewise.

"Temperance will, after all, be found the best of physicians, as hunger is the best of cooks," said Mr Sydney; "and he that eats to live, has perhaps more of the actual pleasure of the *gourmand*, than any city alderman whatever."

"You would not say so," replied Mr Wouldbewise, with feeling, "had you ever dined at Goutabouches, the Restaurateur, Rue de Sensuelle, a Paris. Ah, there, I confess, cookery assumes the form of enlightened science; and men of genius, and liberal educa-

tion, are not ashamed to devote their time and talents to its improvement. I understand there are some thoughts of having a professor of that science at our universities."

" 'Tis a practical one at least," said Colonel Portly. "We must all of us," he continued, "in our day, more or less, have experienced the bore of getting our victuals spoiled by unskilful cooks. The excellent wines, however, we can now procure, which I consider as one of the greatest blessings of peace, are some consolation."

"Pray, Colonel," said Mr Scrape-ofall, "have you drunk any of that rare wine, made of a Madeira grape, called Quintavino?"

"No," said the Colonel, "I never happened even to hear of it."

"Nevertheless, with all due submission," said Mr Scrape-ofall, "'tis a wine much celebrated, though by no means in general circulation."

"I wish I could get a little of it circulated down my throat," said the Marquis.

"I happened to taste it at the Duke of Bragabout's," continued Scrape-ofall, "he received some dozens, which I assure you was no small present, from Prince de Tasteall Drink. I remember he said, when he tasted it, that Bacchus himself must have owned it was nectar."

“Do you happen to know how it is made?” asked Mr Wouldbewise.

“I heard a few particulars,” said Mr Scrape-of-all. “Its excellency depends much on the season being fine. The grape does not ripen above once in the seven years; and the vessels in which the wine is made are of the finest china. The fermentation is allowed to continue only two days; and the oxygen and other gases are drawn off through silver tubes, from the sides of the china vessels. ’Tis astonishing the difference even a few yards makes in the soil of a vineyard; and the same grape makes quite a different wine, when perhaps there is but a hedge between.”

“I am sorry I cannot give you any of it,” said the Marquis; “but I shall write to Twirlacork, my wine-merchant, about it. Meantime, here is some excellent hock, which has been in my possession twenty years; and I believe it belonged to my grandfather. —Glassfill, hand that bottle round.”

“What a delightful party we had last night at Mrs Shewmeoff’s!” said Lady Maria Murphy; “were you there, Miss Sydney?”

“No, I regretted it much; we only left the rural shades this morning.”

“You missed ^a great deal, indeed; we had some charming music from the Miss Harmonys. What delightful girls! they are so good-humoured and obli-

ging. I hope you and Miss Treadwell will go with me to-morrow, to Lady Sitever's assembly. I go first to Kean's benefit ; I am in hopes of a large box, and in that case can easily accommodate you all."

"How sadly Kean is fallen off," said Colonel Portly ; "though as yet he has no rival at Drury-lane. He is a sad dissipated dog ; I fear he will not live long."

"'Tis a great pity," said Lady Maria Murphy ; "for he is so good hearted ; does not care for money at all ; gives it away with both hands. Kemble was an ornament to society."

"Oh ! but Kemble was a far superior man to Kean," said Colonel Portly.

The disputes ran high upon the respective merits of these great actors ; but, for the taste and penetration of the company be it spoken, the voice was in favour of Kemble. There was a good deal of mixed conversation after dinner ; a good deal of satire upon characters who no doubt merited it ; nay, there were some sharp replies and cuts given to each other. But when a religious character came to be discussed, then, as if by a charm, all differences were composed ; and they united in cutting it up, and turning it into ridicule, if it could not be treated with contemptuous indifference.

When the ladies came up to the drawing-room, the female orators came more into play, and some of

the young ladies seemed to take their tongues out of their pockets. Mrs Pelham, too long restrained, broke forth into a strain of panegyric upon Miss Treadwell's whole appearance.

"You are a charming creature," said she.

Her curls, her foot, her complexion ; and above all, her dress, drew forth Mrs Pelham's warmest heartfelt encomiums.

Miss Treadwell laughed, and said, "How foolish !" but at the same time she thought, "How just is her praise ! the others are cold creatures."

There was a great deal of gossiping, and a great many very ill-natured remarks made by most of the party upon people like themselves.

Some marriages were talked of as certain ; some flirtations as likely to end in matrimony ; and some as already off.

Some people were applauded for dressing well ; and some were decried, for looking as if their clothes were thrown upon them by chance. Some people were praised up to the skies, for merely being inoffensive ; and some were cut up, through envy and rivalry.

Lady Amelia conversed with Miss Sydney ; and their conversation was at least moral.

Miss Matilda's music was good, and the ladies were contented to listen. Miss Treadwell was seated in an attitude ; and Mrs Pelham sat admiring her.

In the course of the evening, Lady Amelia contrived to retire to her own room. This was no self-denial ; she had too much mind not to weary of her companions, and too much modesty to think her conversation would tend to their improvement. To keep herself from being infected by their worldly discourse was her great aim ; and after an hour's quiet, she again rejoined them, better guarded against idle talk, foolish jesting, and slanderous tongues. The evening concluded, as usual, with a party.

Lady Doubtall next morning, when she rang Mrs Miller's bell according to appointment, felt like a knight-errant on the point of concluding some perilous adventure, and looked upon herself as Charity personified.

The day proved favourable, which was fortunate for Lady Doubtall ; though by no means important to Mrs Miller, who, from long habit, and in spite of a delicate constitution, had become inured to clime and climate, hot and cold, wet and dry, joy and sadness, poverty and riches. She took Lady Doubtall through some of the most wretched abodes of the Cowgate and West-port. Lady Doubtall piqued herself upon her feelings ; and she really was not hard-hearted ; she was more than once moved to tears by the scenes she beheld. They visited also some virtuous poor ; for tares and wheat grow together in this class, as in the higher ranks of life. She saw

aged grandmothers, and pious grandchildren soothing their pillows—she saw darkness and penury with cleanliness and contentment—she saw patient sufferers racked with agony, yet hoping in, and blessing their Redeemer—she saw some scenes that harrowed up her soul,—worthless parents, and suffering, apparently innocent, children.

“ Good God !” said Lady Doubtall, “ and is it literally so, that the children suffer for the sins of their parents !”

“ The Governor of all the world is wise and just !” said Mrs Miller ; “ I have sometimes remarked, that wicked parents have proved useful, as warnings to their children.”

Many blessings were poured upon the ladies, in leaving the sad dwellings of misery.

“ Would to God they might be heard for me !” said Lady Doubtall.—“ This must be Christian charity,” thought she, as she looked upon Mrs Miller ; “ no other principle could be strong enough to make any woman frequent such scenes.” She had a heart which had, hitherto, only been occupied with herself ; but she now emptied her purse into Mrs Miller’s hands.

“ Alas, alas !” said Mrs Miller, “ money can do little—He that hath the true riches, can alone effectually relieve them. But I shall use your bounty to the best of my knowledge, and do you join your

prayers with mine, that God may send his blessing with it, to these poor ones of the earth."

"And can it be that there are such scenes in this town," said Lady Doubtall, "where till now I have never seen but feasting and jollity, nor heard but the sounds of music and dancing?"

'Ah! little think the gay licentious proud—'

What a world is this! Good God! could I have believed it!"

The scenes she had visited made a deep impression upon her mind—her own charities ceased to speak peace to her soul; and when far away from Mrs Miller, the recollection of what she had witnessed in her company, filled her with admiration, and with the desire of "doing so likewise." And we shall hope that that essential change of heart, so important to the Christian, took place, through the power of God, in the heart of this (hitherto) daughter of the world, and heir of wrath.

CHAPTER XXV.

DURING the residence of Miss Sydney and Miss Treadwell at the Marquis of Vainall's, the indefatigable endeavour of the latter of these young ladies to please all who approached her, attained its end, in drawing forth plaudits of admiration from the Marquis and Marchioness, and the other inmates of their house.

Mr Sydney alone seemed to have lost his eyes ; for he saw only Lady Amelia. Miss Treadwell claimed too much ; she expected his admiration as a right ; and he claimed the privilege of refusing it. Had Miss Treadwell been aware, that to the eye of taste, no charms are much prized which do not betoken the existence of something fair within, she would have known better how to imitate that modesty, that tenderness, that diffidence, that thoughtlessness of self, which, combined, give indefinable charm to female beauty.

Mr Sydney was a man, whose lips would have disdained to utter, as many do, the language of insincere compliment ; and on this account he was particularly

provoking to Miss Treadwell, for he seemed neither to see nor feel, that this resplendent beauty was nigh. Miss Treadwell had no plan to engage his affections ; —but why should he not admire her beauty ? Why should he not worship her at a distance ? It was an insult at the shrine of her charms, the bare idea of which she could not brook. Accordingly after some private misgivings, she settled it to her own satisfaction, that he was playing a part, and that he merely pretended not to admire her. How weak and deceitful is the human heart ! Miss Treadwell was persuaded she had no love or admiration, and piqued herself on being free from this weakness, incident to beauties. Some characters are so deep, that their traits are not perceived till intimacy and frequent meetings unfold the disposition ; but Miss Treadwell's was discernible at first sight. None were so blind as not to perceive that she endeavoured to throw more than nature's fire into her sparkling eyes, and that her pretty mouth was enlarged to shew her teeth.

She read French novels, committed Lord Byron's poetry to memory, and formed herself upon the model of his heroines. The character Miss Treadwell acquired in Edinburgh, may be gathered from the observations of her friends, or rather from the remarks of her acquaintances.

“ She is a very handsome creature,” said Lady Maria Murphy.

“ Yes, and she knows it as well,” replied Dr Pelham.

“ Her affectation would spoil the handsomest woman upon earth,” said the Marchioness.

“ She’s a fine woman,” said the Marquis, “ though rather thin.”

“ Is there anything in her ?” said Dr Spleen.

“ Why, if she has any wit,” said Lady Maria, “ she has still more modesty ; for none of it has ever reached my ears.”

“ According to Spurzheim, her head is not overloaded,” said Mr Sydney.

“ Pray, is she good tempered ?” said Lady Jane to Miss Sydney, in a tone expressive of doubt.

“ Why, as to that, you must judge for yourself,” was the reply.

There were various insinuations conveyed in the questions and answers with regard to this beauty, whose charms might literally be said to be cut up amongst them ; for one admired her eyes, another her nose, a third her mouth ; each took a feature into favour, and condemned all the others ; and each one spoke as if he could have mended his Maker’s workmanship. Her figure underwent the same criticism, and escaped no better. Yet this was the beautiful Miss Treadwell, and such are worldly friends. Her age, which was actually eighteen, was next discussed ; and Miss Sydney said, she knew that she

was no older, as she was born the same year and month as herself. To the force of this evidence Dr Splcen assented with a suppressed humph.

Lady Amelia alone spoke of Miss Treadwell as if she had been present. The rule of "do as you would be done by," she carried into "speak as you would be spoken of." It were to be wished indeed, that Christians more frequently prayed that "a watch might be set before the door of their lips."

Miss Treadwell was not insensible to the beauty of Lady Amelia's manners ; personal charms she never yet discerned in any woman but herself. Lady Amelia spoke and looked the truth, and when anything was said in her company militant against her ideas of right, a sorrowful look was all the reproach she conveyed.

The hearts of the unconverted are the same in all ranks ; outward circumstances are but the dress, and the heart of Davie Snuffawec, sinner, with his tattered coat, whining tone, and shuffling gait, is exactly a counterpart of Earl Puredescent, sinner, with his ribbands and orders, distinct tone, and commanding gait.

The Marquis of Vainall, being an indolent and an idle man, felt himself dependent upon others for that entertainment which his own mind could not supply. People of all descriptions found themselves welcomed to his house. Even people whose faith differed widely

from his own, he would gladly have entertained ; but those who were esteemed religious characters in Edinburgh, were shy of mingling in the society of worldlings. “ Come out from among them, and be ye separate,” said the Scripture to them,—“ what fellowship hath light with darkness ?” But trivial occurrences are often the means of bringing about the most unlikely events. The Marquis of Vainall, from pure idleness, and as a device for killing the time, had chosen to become a student at the Chemistry Class, where the great celebrity of the Professor, and the skill and elegance with which he exhibited his interesting experiments, contrived to allure at once the scientific student, and such idlers as the Marquis, who came *pour passer le tems*. He found himself generally seated beside a gentleman, whose intelligent good humour comprehended the subject both for himself and his companion.

A more acute man than the Marquis would soon have discovered that this was no ordinary character ; but there was nobody to tell him so, and the Marquis was not in the habit of making discoveries for himself. But his vicinity to the hospitable Marquis procured him so many invitations to dine, that, consistently with good breeding, he could at length no longer decline.

The stranger’s name was Mr Moreland, the benevolent unknown who had relieved the Simpsons.

From his early youth, he had devoted a naturally fine understanding to the study of evangelical truth ; and what had been so diligently sought for, was revealed to his humble mind. Yet to him, as to many, “ strait had been the gate,” and numberless the obstructions. His passions were strong, and at many periods of his life the whole artillery of the devil appeared to be planted against him. How light are the outward trials that worldlings talk so feelingly of, compared with the struggles of mind, the contest between good and evil, which takes place in the heart of the Christian ! Yet Morcland stood armed “ with the shield of Faith, the helmet of Salvation, and the breastplate of Righteousness.” He now felt assured that things were well for him in Heaven, and he studied to live conformably to the precepts of the Gospel. He was not a member of any profession ; his fortune was ample, and chiefly spent in charitable uses. His great aim was to be a lover and follower of truth in all its various modifications—to think for himself, and to act upon what he believed. But this is by no means so easy as some might imagine—indeed, when undertaken in our own strength, it may be said to be utterly impracticable ; and Morcland often groaned under his incapacity to discern the leadings of that Providence, which he longed to follow as his only guide, through all the mazes of changing life. He had travelled much, and seen what is

called a great deal of the world, which only served to convince him, that a very faithful epitome of it was to be found in every domestic circle; and the passions of men were displayed to him, when he examined his own heart. His home was with an uncle who had been a parent to him, and at whose death it was supposed he would succeed to great wealth. The uncle was a mere moral character, and but an indifferent moralist. The nephew was an evangelical Christian; and often, in moments of disgust and weariness, wished to leave his uncle and live by himself—for his uncle's pleasures were not his pleasures; his precepts he could not assent to, and his example he could not follow. But his uncle was an old man, and an old man who loved him, though he hated his Christianity. The nominal friends of Moreland were not idle in passing their remarks upon the palpable difference between his character and theirs.

“What a change religion has made upon him!” said Tom Pleaseman. “He now absolutely thinks it a sin to spend an evening at cards with his uncle. Poor man, he is now sadly neglected—I will not be surprised if he cuts off Moreland with a shilling. How any man can so far deceive himself, is amazing! To think the Christian religion enjoins him to neglect domestic duties, and to lavish those attentions upon strangers, which are due to his own relations!” and Tom Pleaseman held up his hands, and shook

his head, and gave a slow intelligent speaking shrug with his shoulder ; and drew in his chair and sat down with an air which expressed—" From such follies how guiltless am I."

Moreland felt these remonstrances deeply, and laboured for some time at the impossibility of pleasing everybody. He next sought the advice of pious Christians, and in some degree allowed himself to be led by them ; but, upon reflection, he found that they often led him wrong.

He then rejected all advice but such as was conveyed to him through the Scriptures, according to his own understanding of the passages. Still he fell into errors which pained his conscience.

" Whither shall I now turn ?" said he ; and he prayed earnestly for the Holy Spirit to direct him. His prayer was heard ; for soon he remarked in his Bible, instructions he had hitherto passed carelessly over. They told him of a leading, a guiding of Providence, upon which Christians might surely rely. " This, then, is my sure anchor," said he ; " this will I hold fast." He was now comparatively at peace ; and his heart, while believing, found rest in God, and a strong assurance that he was doing the divine will. Yet occasionally this faith was weakened, and again his doubts and perplexities returned.

Much passed in the mind of Moreland on this interesting subject ; and sometimes it broke forth even

in conversing with the worldlings who frequented his uncle's house. His uncle often wished that fate (or Providence, as his nephew called it,) would provide an helpmate for him ; but the choice of the uncle would not have been the choice of the nephew ; for they differed in all things.

“ If Heaven would indeed direct me in the choice of a wife,” said Moreland to himself, “ then, not inconsistently with my duty, I might know domestic felicity ; then I might leave my uncle's house, without hurting either his feelings or my own. Then I might have a happy home with those I love. But why do I repine ? Doth not God direct all my steps ? If a change of state were good for me, would it not be provided ?”

“ I wonder if Moreland expects Providence to open the door and push him out by the shoulders,” said some of the scoffers ; “ he says Providence has not sent him a wife ; does he expect an angel to come down from the clouds for him ?”

“ That is all in my eye,” said Tom Pleaseman ; “ Moreland is a sensible fellow, and bears with his uncle, as is his duty ; knowing that virtue will be its own reward, in the shape of an estate of £4000 per annum.”

Moreland's mind was in this condition when he came to pass a month or two in Edinburgh ; to see and become acquainted with the men of the north.

He had an introduction to Mr Mansfield, and other evangelical Christians ; and, as has been before related, he happened, at Dr H——'s class, to be seated by the hospitable Marquis of Vainall, one of whose numerous invitations he at length agreed to accept for the following day at six o'clock.

CHAPTER XXVI.

“ Let no one say that there is need
Of time for love to grow ;
Ah no, the love that kills indeed
Dispatches at a blow.
The spark, which but by slow degrees
Is nursed into a flame,
Is habit—friendship—what you please—
But love is not its name.”

AT six o'clock next day, Moreland found himself surrounded by the liveried menials of the Marquis of Vainall, who echoed his name up the elegant staircase, as they ushered him into the drawing-room, where, in a few seconds, he found himself seated next to Miss Treadwell. His appearance and manners were very prepossessing ; and that lady immediately spread her snares for his admiration. Never were her efforts to please more successful. Moreland appeared, and really was, smitten in a very sudden manner. It is in vain to attempt to account for such occurrences. He greatly admired her, and soon fell in love with her ; and, of course, thought her a model of perfection. Whence such delusions arise it is impossible to tell.

The Almighty superintends the most minute trials and concerns of his creatures, and for them that love him "all things shall work together for good." Yet, according to human views, Lady Amelia should have been the choice of Mr Moreland, and Miss Treadwell of Mr Sydney.

The match-making Marchioness soon perceived the impression Miss Treadwell had produced upon Moreland; and the result of all the inquiries that were made concerning him, stimulated the Sydneys to favour the prospect, notwithstanding his methodical tenets; for his fortune and connections were good, his expectations were great, and rumour and four hundred miles distance magnified and multiplied the whole of his advantages.

Moreland had more of the harmlessness of the dove, than of the wisdom of the serpent. The knowledge of the world, which is so much prized by worldly people, did not make a part of his character; and, in common with many others, he was apt to judge of the minds of others by his own.

Dr Spleen having the same propensity, was often in the right in his judgments, and was in general esteemed a man of more penetration than Moreland, merely because his own mind held up to him a more faithful picture of the mass of mankind.

Moreland had much too exalted an idea of Miss Treadwell, and much too low an opinion of himself,

to suppose or perceive that there could be any plot upon him : He wished to fly ; he was perplexed and displeased to find himself fascinated by a woman, who, in spite of his attachment, he perceived was not deeply impressed with evangelical truth. The thought sometimes occurred, “ Were I married to her, I might be the means of bringing her round to my sentiments.” Dangerous the experiment ! fatal the failure !

Everybody knows that a man can pay a lady no attention in Edinburgh, without having his marriage to her fixed by the gossips of that city, long before the lady has had it in her power either to accept or refuse him ; and a letter from his uncle soon informed Moreland of what all the town had heard of but himself. The old gentleman gave it his warmest approbation, and offered to assist him in making suitable settlements.

This letter threw him into an agitation he could scarcely conceal, and he retired to his chamber to consider its contents. “ I must leave her,” said he ; yet how his heart sickened at the thought ! “ Whence is this weakness which overwhelms me ? surely it proceeds from the Author of Evil.” He prayed to God for wisdom to direct him, and for strength to act.

Hope whispered to his heart, “ Am I not fastidious ? Am I certain that Miss Treadwell is an unbeliever ? Am I not uncharitable ? ‘ Judge not, lest

ye be judged.' I will try to ascertain this point ; she may be found, after all, to be a Christian, though certainly not an advanced one." Thus doth Satan often make use of the passions of men to blind their reason, and confound their sense of right and wrong.

Yet Moreland was sincere in wishing to ascertain precisely what were the real sentiments of Miss Treadwell ; but how to discover them he could not well tell. She was so facile in her manners, and so desirous to please ; so obliging, so easily persuaded. Who, then, could discover the mind of her whose mind seemed always to reflect the sentiments of every one who approached her ?

It was Sunday ; and he asked her to go with him and hear Mr Mansfield preach. She readily complied ; and after the service was over, joined cordially in his admiration of the preacher ; but, alas, she also joined cordially in the Marchioness's admiration of Dr Sweetly. She assented to everything he said with an alacrity which, to an impartial observer, would have expressed rather a compliment to the speaker, than any concern for the subject of his conversation. Poor Moreland felt much embarrassed, and at a loss how to act. " Shall I consult Mr Mansfield ?" said he to himself ; " no, he can only derive knowledge from a source equally open to me. I shall consult no one, but pray for faith, and act upon it."

I am aware that all these doubts and perplexities will appear to those who have not experienced similar trials, like the waverings of an unsettled judgment, or the inconsistencies of a fickle mind. But even worldly characters, upon a faithful examination of the thoughts which pass through their hearts, will perceive how often such distressing doubts are repressed, merely by the workings of a self-sufficient mind.

“ I must do as I would be done by,” said Moreland ; “ I will therefore lay open my mind to Miss Treadwell, and judge accordingly.”

When he once formed a resolution after mature deliberation, he never changed it ; and was not driven by the wind of occurrences from one plan to another. He therefore determined to bring his fate to an issue next morning. He spent the preceding evening at the Marquis of Vainall’s. Miss Treadwell was more than usually beautiful ; her colour was high ; her eyes were bright ; her beauty was at its height ; —for, alas, she was seized with sickness and shivering, and next morning was declared to be in a violent fever.

Moreland’s prayer seemed likely to be answered in a way he had little dreamt of. She swam for her life for some weeks.

He felt deeply interested in her fate, but at the same time deeply submissive to the will of God.

But at length Dr Doondie and Dr Fearnought declared her out of danger.

Moreland felt his passion increased by the fear of losing her ; he intrusted his secret to Lady Amelia, and told her his determination to depart for a year ; and if he found Miss Treadwell's sentiments such as to induce her to give up the world, and unite herself to a man who would love her next to his God ;—then, (if she consented,) he would return and claim her hand. “ If she can love an evangelical Christian,” said he, “ she cannot hate the truth.”

Lady Amelia was much surprised. “ This should be my rule if Sydney should ask me,” she thought with a sigh.

Miss Treadwell continued to recover slowly, but her strength and beauty were both much impaired.

The danger from which she had escaped, the fear of death, the temporary loss of beauty, all combined to impress her mind with serious thought ; and she received the communication of Lady Amelia with much feeling, and in a flattering manner for Moreland.

He delayed his departure for a few weeks longer, and had the happiness of seeing her once more.

She had piqued herself upon her beauty ; her glass told her that it was fled ; and jealousy of her idol,

painted it as more irretrievably gone than it really was.

She was humbled ; and perhaps the first victory she obtained over herself, was seeing Moreland ;—aware, herself, of her faded beauty, and convinced that all others must be as sensible of the change as she was.

Where were her golden ringlets ?—Cut off ; and Mr Ladiescue was busily employed making them into a wig.

Where was her brilliant complexion ?—Fled, perhaps never to return.

Where were her sparkling eyes ?—Their spirit was languid, and their lustre dim.

Where was her musical voice ?—Feeble and weak, and not again to be exerted in bravura.

Where was her pride ?—Happily it seemed also fled.

A slight suffusion came over her cheek as Moreland entered ; and she jealously watched for the surprise of disappointment, naturally to be expected from one who had been so great an admirer of her beauty. But strong partiality or love is blind ; and his affection for her was too deeply rooted, for the loss of her looks to deface the image imprinted on his mind.

He talked to her of the Power which had saved her from the jaws of death. Tears flowed from her eyes ;

he thought he never before had seen her look so beautiful ; and he flattered himself, that the diamond within was still fairer than the casket.

He repeated all that he had said to Lady Amelia ; and having torn himself away, he departed to return in a year,—hoping that in all things they would then agree.

“ Her beauty was her greatest fault,” thought he, as he bid her adieu, and, not without effort, stepped into the mail which was to convey him far away from her, to painful duties, and to a home where his heart resided not.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE natural character of Mr Sydney had a strong resemblance to the natural character of Lady Amelia Truefeel; but her renewed character had much more resemblance to the renewed character of Moreland.

Sydney had a fine mind; he had an honourable mind; he had a refined mind. But he was a man of the world; had he lost the esteem of man, he would have lost his own; his character was formed upon the highest standards of what was esteemed praiseworthy in the world. All that man could do for himself, he had done; and all that nature could do for man, she had done for him. Lady Amelia felt his attractions, and feared to feel them still more. She wished to avoid him now, not as formerly, from fear of encouraging a passion on his part, which her conscience might prevent her from returning; but,—mortifying thought to female pride! it was now from fear of its increasing power over herself; for his attentions continued, but were not increased. He looked like a lover, but neglected every opportunity of

declaring himself. "Why do I think of him at all?" said she; "my mind should soar to higher things. No, I do not, must not, love him;" and she prayed to be preserved from the weakness of her own heart. But to avoid him was impossible; for, upon some pretence or other, he contrived seldom to be a day without being much in her company. "Will you go with my sister and me," said he to her one day, "to visit Lady Trifle? she is to have a concert this morning, and I know that you are fond of music."

"No," said she, "I cannot go; I have an engagement with Mrs Miller. My father has allowed me to go with her for once, to hear that celebrated missionary, Mr Darkhindoo, who is to speak this forenoon; and there is to be a collection for the cause.—You had better both come with me."

"No; that I shall not;" said Sydney. "I do not like these fellows; and I promised my mother to go with her to Lady Trifle's. Do, Lady Amelia, favour me, and give up going with Mrs Miller. My mother and the Marchioness will be so pleased to see you at the concert."

Lady Amelia looked melancholy, and shook her head, and replied, "I cannot." Sydney looked piqued, yet why he had any right to be so, he could scarcely define. Lady Amelia was sorry she had grieved him, yet almost flattered she had it in her

power to excite an interest, which shewed at least that her actions did not appear indifferent to him.

She went, therefore, with Mrs Miller to the Missionary Meeting, and there she heard several speakers, whose monotonous tones, and ill-selected phrases, filled her with weariness ; but there were others, whose zeal, whose animation, whose eloquence, charmed her eager attention, arrested her every thought, and filled her with enthusiasm for converting the Heathen.

“ Would that Sydney had been here,” thought Lady Amelia ; “ that last speaker would have cleared away his prejudices.”

The room was crowded with people ; well-dressed nominal Christians.

“ I am happy to see that there are so many good people in Edinburgh,” said Lady Amelia to Mrs Miller.

Mrs Miller smiled. “ Would that all assembled here were real Christians,” said she. “ It is an easy matter to come to a Bible or Missionary Society. However, it shews that the frequenters of these meetings have no enmity to the great cause, and it is to be hoped that they contribute their mite towards the furtherance of it. For my own part, unless on a particular occasion, I seldom frequent them.”

“ And is it Mrs Miller I hear talking thus coolly ?” asked Lady Amelia.

“ I find my time more profitably employed in the

service of my Redeemer," answered Mrs Miller, "in visiting the poor, and instructing the ignorant ; yet I do not altogether deprive myself of the pleasure of meetings like this. 'Though I cannot partake the labours of the self-devoted foreign missionary, yet we are all called upon more or less to be missionaries at home, and by every means in our power to promote the common cause of Christianity. Where are there more sinners to be converted than in this town, where all are called by the name of Christ?'"

The meeting ended, as usual, in prayer.—A violent deluge of rain came on unexpectedly, and put the audience in fear of rheumatisms, toothaches, and colds. Some trembled even for their bonnets and pelisses ; for the saints have all those feelings in common with sinners. One of Mrs Miller's friends, Mr Henry Trueman, came to assist them in getting out.

"What a charming speech was Mr Darkhindoo's !" said he. "I hope you had a good seat ; I lost mine by assisting some ladies to get in at the speaker's door. Are you to be here to-morrow evening ? Mr Tartarfill is expected to give some very interesting intelligence."

"No," said Mrs Miller, "I shall not come. I have promised to drink tea with my old acquaintance, Mrs Cardlove. She has been confined to bed for

some time, and her fashionable friends are too much engaged at this season to be much with her."

The carriages and chairs moved off.

"This is not very unlike an ordinary assembly," thought Lady Amelia.—But an obliging spirit seemed to pervade the company; for all the carriages were crowded, and each seemed anxious to assist his neighbour.

"Upon the whole, religious characters have certainly more amiable manners than the worldly," said Lady Amelia.

"Doubtless they have," said Mrs Miller. "What more visible operation does Christianity perform than christianizing the manners?"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

“ And much they are deceived, that think to find
A state without some blemish or a stain ;
Conceit may cast ideas in the mind,
And forge strange forms, in the inventive brain ;
But states consist of men, and men will still retain
Our nature’s badge, which unto all doth cleave,
That is to be deceived, and to deceive.”

WHILE Lady Amelia was at the Missionary Meeting, Mr Sydney was seated at Lady Trifle’s grand concert, in profound silence. • Solos, duets, trios, quartetts innumerable, were performed ; and “ charming,” “ exquisite,” re-echoed at every pause. Mr Sydney was very fond of music, but not of this kind of music : yet, to move or come away was impossible, without drawing upon himself the anathema of Shakespeare :

“ The man that hath not music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils ;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus ;
Let no such man be trusted.”

Nevertheless, he could not refrain from yawning ; and his thoughts were anywhere but at the concert.

—"Lady Amelia was wise," thought he, "I ought to have gone with her."—The Miss Trifles sung some Italian ariettes, accompanied on the violincello, by Mr Piantopiano, whose graver studies were all neglected in order to shew off as an indifferent musician. Sydney felt the singing a little relief, though meditating his escape before the next act; for it was a regular concert. He had risen, under pretence of giving Miss Camilla Trifle a better seat; but "hush" was called out, and a solo commenced before he had time for flight. He now resigned himself to his fate, and communed with himself on what was passing around him.

He observed that very indifferent performers gave themselves great airs, and that (as geniuses are often alleged to be whimsical,) they affected whimsicality, without evincing genius; as would-be-great-men imagine they are truly great men, because they have the weaknesses that link the little with the great. He also made some observations upon the listeners. Those who had no real taste for music pretended to feel most raptures, and were loudest in their applause. Real feeling of every kind is generally silent. But there were some performances which pleased even the fastidious Mr Sydney; they were excellent of their kind, though dearly bought, by endurance of the insipid, tasteless productions with which they were associated.

“ Had I a son,” thought Sydney, “ whose genius for music could not be repressed, I would have him taught music as a profession, rather than that he should become one of the paltry performers I see here.”

As all things have an end, so had this weary concert ; and the tongues condemned so long to silence, now broke loose with unrestrained volubility.— “ Charming ! delightful ! what a treat ! what a feast ! exquisite ! what taste ! what expression ! ”— To which words of delight Mr Sydney smiled assent, while Dr Spleen groaned.

“ How much Lady Amelia has missed ! ” said Miss Sydney to her brother. “ Does she think it wrong, I wonder, to go to a concert ? ”

“ I do not know,” said Mr Sydney ; “ but she was otherwise engaged.”

“ I hope Lady Amelia is not so foolish,” said Mrs Sydney, seriously.

The Sydneys had long observed George’s predilection for Lady Amelia, and had their hopes and fears upon this subject. But for her religious principles, she was as unexceptionable in their eyes as in his.

“ I wish I had been with Lady Amelia, instead of that tiresome concert,” said Sydney.

“ Why, George,” said his sister, “ I see you will end in becoming a Methodist.”

They passed a bookseller's shop.—“ I shall buy a book for Lady Amelia, to make my peace,” said he.

“ Here is a very beautiful edition of Lord Byron's poems,” said his sister ; “ you had better order that home for her.”

The book arrived, and Sydney presented it to Lady Amelia.—She blushed, and with some embarrassment said—“ I am sorry that that is not a book I would wish to have in my library.”

“ What narrow prejudice !” said Miss Sydney ; “ George, I would take it much amiss to have my present refused.”

Sydney felt piqued ; there was much force, he thought, in his sister's observation ; he was silent, but thoughts are sometimes strongest when they dare not reveal themselves.—“ What a perversion of a fine mind,” thought he ; “ and yet she is so amiable and so sweet tempered.”

At home Lady Amelia had met with opposition, and decided disapprobation of her religious sentiments ; but when she was with the Sydney family, polite indifference, not to be warmed to hate or opposition, was the manner in which her sentiments were received—a something bordering on contempt, which, to natural feeling, is perhaps more difficult to bear than active opposition. “ The world's dread laugh,” is a bug-bear that few can face without emotion ;

and it is long before even the Christian can be content “to be made the offscouring of all things.”

When at Beauideal, Lady Amelia felt always upon her guard; for there was Mr Sydney to smile in scorn, Mrs Sydney to laugh in scorn, and Miss Caroline to say that it was a harmless weakness. Mr George Sydney alone talked of serious Christians with respect; he even considered it as a feeling deeper than political opposition, that prompted Mr Hardzeal to pray for the Queen; and he blushed when he heard people, liberal on other points, ascribe such unworthy motives to such characters as Mr Mansfield. He was a tory, and a sincere lover of his country; but he judged that it was possible for others to think differently from himself, both upon politics and religion, and yet be actuated by sincere piety, and honourable principle. Liberal as he was, however, Lady Amelia perceived his countenance often to express, “may you live to be wiser.” Things that were indifferent to Sydney, were in the eyes of Lady Amelia of great moment, as proofs of obedience or disobedience to her Saviour; and he was sometimes mortified to find how inflexible she was in what he deemed mere trifles.

She consented to pay the Sydneys a week’s visit at Beauideal. In living under the same roof with a person, for but a few days, there are a thousand occurrences which unfold the character to each other, in a

truer point of view than can be attained in years of regular town-visiting. There is time for talking of the weather and for sitting silent ; and some find time for an evening nap ; and one can take the liberty of being stupid for an hour or two, when sure of having an opportunity of redeeming one's character before the visit is ended. Whereas, in town, where a visit is limited to a few hours at the utmost, it is usually expected that we are to speak and to be spoken to,—“ Ah, there's the rub,”—to be questioned and to reply.

Yet Beauideal was perhaps one of the most agreeable mansions in the country. Every person followed his own inclination ; and dulness was the failing of none of the family ; for they all possessed some character, and the talents and accomplishments fitted to embellish polished society. Of worldly character, there could scarcely be a greater variety of fair specimens assembled in one corner. Their conversation was entertaining ; and for all the uses of this life, instructive ; and a person of taste, who expected to find happiness upon earth, would have thought that surely it dwelt with the Sydneys at Beauideal. All the literary society that Edinburgh could boast of, were on habits of intimacy at Beauideal ; and many feasts of reason were to be had at the board of Mr Sydney. But Lady Amelia's mind was fast opening ; and the want, the greatest of all wants, spoiled her whole enjoyments ;—for God, if in their thoughts at

all, was there below politics ; below the ordinary duties and concerns of life ; below pleasure ; and only above gross sin.

On Sunday, more than any other day, she felt the painful conviction, that she and they were not of one mind. The text, " Speak not your own words ; think not your own thoughts," which had been often quoted to her by Mrs Miller, came forcibly to her recollection.

" Can I keep the Sabbath holy, with my present associates ?" said she to herself ; and a deep heartfelt sigh escaped her as her conscience answered in the negative.

In the evening there was no difference in the manners or conversation of the family, from any other day, except that there were no cards, no music, no workboxes. Lady Amelia retired to her room, and would have continued there for the whole of the evening ; but dread of their pitying compassionate smiles brought her back to the drawing-room. Some were reading reviews, magazines, and newspapers. Lady Amelia went and opened a large folio containing beautiful scripture plates.

" I know you think it wrong to speak upon Sunday," said Miss Matilda, " or I would come and converse with you upon the fine arts."

" Hush !" said Mr Sydney, senior, " and I will read you a tolerable satire upon a certain class of no-

vels which I find here," taking up a weekly journal. "I think I detect in it the style of our friend Spleen. There is nothing immoral in it; so I hope, Lady Amelia, you do not object."

Lady Amelia sighed, and determined in her own mind never to pass another Sunday in this society.

"Proposals for publishing a novel," continued Mr Sydney in his reading voice. "This novel is intended to be totally different from any other novel. For which reason I think it honourable to forewarn the public in general, and novel readers in particular, that in describing the characters of my hero and heroine, I mean to take no notice of the numerous and various kinds of sighs, starting tears, precious tears, pearly tears, suffusions, roseate blushes, timid glances, cast down eyes, speaking eyes, sparkling eyes, death-glancing eyes, and all the various modifications of the eye, which, nevertheless, my hero and heroine are to possess in common with every other hero and heroine. As these essentials to all interesting characters have already been handled by abler pens, modesty forbids that I should flatter myself with the hope of having anything new to say on the subject. I mean also to take no charge of their hearts. I am neither to relate how they were seen beating, heard beating, ceased beating. Neither will I write about elastic feet or steps, musical feet, or souls in the feet. Neither are my hero and heroine to be quite invul-

nerable, and at the same time elegantly delicate and susceptible of every possible distress of body and mind.

“ They are by no means to take three fevers in a month, yet look as well as before ; nor are they to be able to do without food or rest. They are neither of them to throw their purses about, as if they were literally trash ; but they are to know precisely what is in them, and be able to open them and take out even a paltry shilling, or sixpence, without derogation from their dignity. All women, high and low, are not to fall in love with my hero ; nor all the men and boys, with my heroine. But they shall have their due proportion of admiration, when their fortunes are known. They shall also be indulged in the full use of the sun, moon, and stars, from their rising to their setting. They shall farther be allowed perturbed dreams, and sleepless nights occasionally ; but by no means to an excess that may endanger their intellects. I shall also allow both of them to play upon all kinds of musical instruments ; having previously been taught. But their harps are not to fly about as if they had wings, from grotto to grotto, and from rock to rock. They are to be moved from place to place, with order, care, and precaution, like the harps of ordinary mortals.

“ Their characters shall be painted according to the most correct patterns of human beauty, and loveliness of behaviour ; but, like other men and women, they

are to have some faults which are not to be considered as virtues. Of course the terms, ‘ Exalted man !’ ‘ most perfect creature !’ ‘ celestial woman !’ ‘ angel !’ ‘ goddess !’ shall never be applied by me to my man and woman. I promise that neither of them shall suddenly be removed from place to place, and meet the other in the centre of a wood, though half an hour before there was every reason to think they were 1000 miles distant from each other.

“ They shall likewise possess every accomplishment, mental and corporeal, having previously been duly taught, and the usual means employed to attain them.”

This *morceau de Spleen*, for it was actually the composition of Dr Spleen, was much applauded. His satire having accumulated after reading some French novels, when on a visit at Lord Dicaways, vented itself in this manner. Mr Sydney discoursed a little, and well, on the mawkish style of sentiment that so generally prevails in works of this description, as calculated to nourish the weaknesses, and depress the stronger parts of character. Yet, perhaps, such young men as Dr Spleen, (who possessed nothing sentimental about him,) might have been almost improved and softened, even by stuff of this description, whether in poetry or prose.

The evening, somehow or other, was got through ; there was a good deal of yawning and stretching, and

apparent fatigue ; for even the intellectual resources of the Sydney family could not entirely do away the tedium that the Sabbath brings to those in whose hearts the work of sanctification is not begun.

Mr Sydney walked up and down the room, put some of the books in order, read some cards for a second time, and tried other devices for passing the time differently from the other days of the week.

“ What a pity,” said he, “ that the prejudices of this country prevent one from playing at cards, and from having music after having been at church ?”

“ In the countries where these licences are allowed, the standard of morality is by no means heightened by it,” said Mr G. Sydney ; “ and even superstition, when it does not go to an extreme, is more favourable to morals, than lawless liberty, which owns no restraint.”

“ I was much amused,” said his father, “ with the warm manner in which Mrs Janet Numskull talks of those who differ from her in their code of faith. I happened to mention the report of her friend Miss Meanwell having become a Baptist. ‘ What,’ said she, reddening with rage, ‘ old goose, not content with the religion of her late worthy father and mother, who sat in Dr Doornail’s, without complaint, all their life ; and she, forsooth, must be ducked ; she ought to be drowned.’”

“ She is a very narrow-minded, bigotted woman,”

said Mrs Sydney ; “ had she been in power in the times of persecution, she would have lighted the fag-gots with her own hands.”

“ She is equally violent upon politics,” observed Mr George Sydney. “ Narrow minds are apt to think all in the wrong who differ from themselves. We may apply to them what Job said to his friends : ‘ No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.’—I hope, Lady Amelia, that you have no friends amongst the Baptists ?”

“ I am not acquainted with any of them,” replied she ; “ but Mrs Miller knows some of them intimately, and thinks them sincere, excellent, charitable, active, benevolent Christians.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

“ My heart still hovering round about you,
I thought I could not live without you.”

GEORGE SYDNEY, notwithstanding their differences of sentiment, found his attachment to Lady Amelia so much increased, that he determined at all risks to offer himself to her. She received his proposals with mixed feelings of pleasure and fear, and hope and doubt. Her heart spoke strongly in his favour. A few years ago, she would have looked upon herself as the most fortunate of her sex. Even a few months ago she would have had no hesitation. But now, what struggles, what scruples arose! Yet such was the affection he had inspired in her, that if her conscience could possibly admit of it, she determined to accept of him. She received his proposals in such a manner, as gave him the strongest hopes; and, accordingly, he made them known, both to her family and his own.

The Marquis and Marchioness received him in the most flattering manner, and would have looked upon her as mad, or very nearly so, had she rejected him.

Poor Amelia was much at a loss. "Where shall I turn?" said she; and she found herself at Mr Mansfield's house. He listened to her with compassionate tenderness. "Have you any reason to think Mr Sydney a Christian?"

"He professes to be so; but he differs much from you, and much from Mrs Miller, and much even from myself."

"Christians have diversities of gifts," said Mr Mansfield; "and we must not judge one another too severely. But do you believe him to be a renouncer of his own righteousness, a firm relier upon his Saviour, for all his hopes here and hereafter, and one who makes the Scriptures his guide through life?"

"I will not attempt to deceive myself and you," replied she. "I fear, that he cannot conceive that his honourable, and apparently virtuous life, is of no avail in obtaining mercy from a holy God. I am sure he would die for his principles, such as they are; his honour, his integrity, his fair fame in the sight of men; but he cannot conceive how things that are highly esteemed amongst men, may be abominations in the sight of God. I know, were I to marry him, he might be grieved with our differing opinions; but he never would oppose my acting according to the light of my conscience. I have guarded against loving him; but sometimes I feel as if Providence pointed him out as a refuge for me to fly to,

when opposed at home. I hope that in time he might be brought to adopt my sentiments."

"Or you his," said Mr Mansfield, with a faint smile. "Gentle enemies prevail, when violent ones would fail."

"Oh, my young friend, in a matter so important, proceed with caution; and may He who can alone enlighten you, be a lamp to your feet, and a guide to your path!"

Lady Amelia returned home, and perused her Bible with earnest prayer. Her conscience was now indeed tender; her heart pleaded powerfully for Sydney; but she told him that she would give a decisive answer in a month; and Sydney remained contented with the hope of then being accepted.

The family of Beauideal did everything in their power to further his views, and obtain for him the lady's consent. Lady Amelia now felt it her duty to speak openly to Mr Sydney on the points nearest her heart;—for which purpose she took every opportunity of declaring her opinions; and, as her father remarked, seemed to be growing worse and worse, which Dr Pelham said, "was only what he had foretold, and invariably proved to be the case." But as the Marquis and Marchioness soon hoped to consign her entirely to Sydney, soul and body, she was now allowed to go where she would, and hear whom she would, and even for the present to forsake the theatre.

Love, but not the love of God, so far overcame George Sydney's scruples, that he attended her to Mr Mansfield's; and the happy Amelia felt daily more at liberty to love him, and rejoiced in the hope that he was now in the fair way of becoming an evangelical Christian. Her mind was now made up, and she agreed to marry him if he allowed her freedom on all religious points. "Let me be honest," said she, "and not deceive him; let not my love deceive myself; and may his affection to me not lead him to yield what his conscience would teach him to deny." Sydney truly loved her, for nothing else but love would have made him put his "unhoused free condition into circumspection and confine, for the sea's worth." He was happy; yet many little circumstances occurred to make him deeply regret their difference in sentiments,—a difference that once appeared to him and to his family to be quite immaterial. But now that Lady Amelia was likely to become so nearly united to them, the family of Beauideal became alive to peculiarities of character, which hitherto they had despised. No doubt, Sydney had promised to leave her free; but he trusted to be able, by judicious management, to win her over, to be all he thought a woman ought to be—all his wife must be. "She loves me, and love has overcome much," thought he.

"He loves me," thought Lady Amelia, "and love has overcome many scruples." But like Moreland,

she trusted much in the direction of Providence to guide her steps. "Oh, let me be careful," said she, "neither to deceive him nor myself. Let me not yield to a lover what I ought to deny to a husband; and may I never have a husband who would attempt to give laws to my conscience!"

My readers must be aware, that Lady Amelia's character was not rising in the estimation of the Sydney family; they feared she carried things too far; and more than once the wish that George had not made his proposals so hurriedly, was expressed to one another. But they were much too honourable to wish him now to withdraw, and much too well-bred to let their difference of sentiment break out in any violent opposition towards her.

CHAPTER XXX.

“Celui qu'on aime, est le vengeur des fautes qu'on a commise sur cette terre ; la divinité lui prete son pouvoir.”

THE family of the Vainalls were now full of nuptial preparation ; and the unexpected arrival of Lord Emery, the heir apparent of the Marquis, after an absence of many years, increased the bustle, and added zest to their satisfaction.

Lord Emery was a very smart man of fashion ; but at the same his natural affections were not so dead, as to exclude all joy when embraced by his mother and sisters. This, however, he rather considered as a weakness ; he had been accustomed to look upon himself as a citizen of the world, to associate with those whom he found agreeable, and to fly from everything in the shape of a bore, whether it assumed the form of old aunt, cousin, old friend, or old anything. He had a kind of good-nature about him, which rendered him agreeable to those who only looked at the surface of a character—he was called good-hearted.

He brought remembrances to all the family—to his father, a snuff-box, and a list of his debts—to his mother, a necklace—to his sisters, some new songs.

The novelty of his arrival having gone by, and the first burst of joy at meeting with his relations subsided, ennui began to exert its influence. He thought all the people of Edinburgh dull—Prince's Street was not like Bond Street—the assemblies were not like Almack's—Dr Pelham was prosing—his wife insufferable—Ladies Maria and Jane frivolous—Lady Amelia a fanatic. In short, the only tolerable people he knew were the Sydneys ; and, to beguile the tedious hours, he galloped out to Beauideal to talk with the ladies, and, when the season permitted, to hunt with the gentlemen. Sad was the life of his poor nag ; for he generally rode thither as if life and death depended upon his speed.

It may be remarked, that though all slow loitering people are not necessarily well employed, yet, such as are not stewards of their time, are generally in a hurry, and rapid in their motions ; and as those who have not a place for everything are generally confused, so those, who have not a time for everything, have generally time for nothing. As Lord Emery, like other idle people, was always too late, so in all his journeys he was rapid in his motions.

Miss Treadwell's beauty was now gradually returning ; but Lord Emery did not think her by any

means as beautiful as Miss Sydney ; neither did he think her half so agreeable. Yet she possessed to him an indescribable charm—she was engaged—and in an idle hour *pour passer le temps*, he formed the resolution of supplanting the absent Moreland ; at all events of making the lady regret her engagement.

He had often met Moreland in London, and felt a great dislike to his character, which on all occasions, he asserted, was that of a hypocrite. But dislike to Moreland was not the prime mover of this project—neither was it love to Miss Treadwell ; but the desire of having something to do—some difficulties to overcome—something to divert him. He entertained a great respect for George Sydney, his intended brother-in-law, whose morality, both in theory and practice, was of a standard far above that which was current among the men of fashion, with whom he was accustomed to mix. Sydney's attachment to his sister Lady Amelia, he looked upon as a weakness ; while he considered her as the most fortunate of her sex in having inspired it.

What was passing in his head with regard to Miss Treadwell, as yet, was only known to himself. None suspected him ; and at Beauideal, he passed for, (and really was, though not merely or exclusively,) a brave, idle, thoughtless, careless warrior, who in time of peace had nothing to do, and whose whole principles were comprized in what he called honour, which con-

sisted in personal courage—in high respect for himself, and in an extreme sensibility to everything which could be construed into an affront.

To supplant Moreland with Miss Treadwell, was at present the uppermost consideration in his mind. His own marriage he had always looked forward to like his death, as a thing of course, as an event that might take place sometime or other, with some beauty or other, and that would be brought about some way or other ; and, certainly, if what he felt for Miss Treadwell might be called love, it was wholly inspired by the desire of gaining a triumph over the man she was already engaged to.

The marriage of Lady Amelia Trucfel, and Mr George Sydney, was now currently reported ; the lawyers and mantua-makers had received their respective orders ; and many of Lady Amelia's evangelical friends had heard of it ;—some with hope, but more with doubts and fears of the likelihood of its proving a happy connexion. The Sydneys were much with her, and wished to be still more so ; but she was so much with Mrs Miller, and with the friends she met at that lady's house, that one would have thought some greater attraction than Sydney drew her there. Indeed this idea was more than once suggested to him ; but he was of too noble a disposition to let causeless jealousy prey upon him, and she

was too open and communicative of all her concerns, to give him the slightest grounds for it.

“ Here are some new songs,” said Sydney to her one day. She looked over them : they were such as Miss Caroline Sydney would have sung, and such as many ladies do sing ; but Lady Amelia felt she could not sing them.—“ Dear Amelia, you are too fastidious,” said he ; “ to the pure, all things are pure.”

“ But I am not pure enough to do evil,” replied she ; “ I cannot sing them with any feeling, or with any heart ; for, how can I wish to feel such words as these ?”

“ What do the words signify ? It is the music, the harmony, which is the principal part of a song. Sing fa, la, la, if you like it better. It is your voice I wish to hear.”

“ Do not think me obstinate ; let me ask Dr Faithful, if he thinks such songs befitting a Christian’s mouth.”

Sydney reddened.

“ What !” said he, “ are you going to become a Catholic, and have a Father Confessor ? I hate all priestcraft, and will never allow one of them to enter my house, or my wife to consult any one but myself on matters of that kind.”

He was off his guard, and had spoken with more warmth than Lady Amelia had ever seen him dis-

play. She felt it deeply, and a tear stood in her eye.

“And would you grieve one who loved you,” said she, “for the sake of shewing your power? I am sure nothing would grieve me more than to cause you any pain, and conscience alone could ever make me have any will but yours.”

“I have also a conscience,” answered he, gravely.

But what farther he would have said was cut short by the opening of the door, and the entrance of Mrs and Miss Caroline Sydney.

“What is the matter?” exclaimed Miss Caroline; “you seem both in the pouts.”

“We have had a little debate upon the propriety of a lady singing these songs,” said Sydney, handing them to his sister. “Lady Amelia rather objects to the sentiments in the verses.”

“What nonsense!” exclaimed Mrs Sydney, forgetting her usual good breeding.

“Come,” said Miss Caroline, “I am not so scrupulous; I shall put you all in good humour by singing them myself.”

So saying, she sat down to the piano. But the family receiving visitors this morning, another interruption took place.

The drawing-room soon filled with the inmates of the house, and with a variety of morning visitors, among whom was Mr Edwards, a friend of the Syd-

neys. The conversation that ensued, took its rise from the discussion that the songs had excited. Mr Edwards was of opinion that refinement of taste and elevation of morality were nearly a-kin. He looked upon all that could be denominated genius, whether displaying itself in music, poetry, or painting, as an inspiration from the giver of every good and perfect gift. That these gifts were often abused he could not deny ; but he asserted roundly that the abused gift was immediately withdrawn ; and that, although whatever men of established fame chose to write, would be read and by many be admired, yet still the duration of their fame depended upon what was truly praiseworthy in their works. He repeated many beautiful quotations from old authors, (for he had read much,) in support of his opinions. But Sydney had much to say on the other side of the question, and gave a list of writers whose genius was perhaps as well established as their immorality. However, he certainly assented to the proposition of Edwards, “ that none of refined taste could relish such sallies—that the heart must be turned to virtue, which can admire it in another ; that the soul must feel the beauties of music, poetry, sculpture, or painting, ere it can appreciate and discern the noble from the base in these sublime arts.”

“ Let all the innumerable host of corrupted novel and dramatic writers, enjoy the praises of their delu-

ded votaries," said Mr Edwards. "Let Voltaire and Rousseau, and all who have written to please the corrupted passions of men, perish with the short-lived age of their delusions. 'Yea, all that they inherit shall dissolve, but truth shall flourish in immortal youth, unhurt amidst the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds!'"

The conversation was rising towards a sublimity which will not last long in an Edinburgh drawing-room, or indeed in any room in this world, and it speedily sunk into the ordinary routine of "Have you seen to-day's papers?"

"I think we shall have war," said one.

"I think we shall have rain," said another.

"I think we shall have fine weather," said a third; and a fourth had nothing left to say upon this popular subject, but "I think we shall have a change of weather."

"Good morning," said Mr Edwards, getting up and bowing an adieu, "I am going to look in at the Royal Society."

"I must also be off," said Spleen, "I have to attend the Royal Infirmary."

"I shall go as far as the Club with you," said Dr Pelham.

"I must also go," said Miss Gostling, "to see

your new dresses at Miss L—ys, but I shall see you very soon again.”

“ Say that I am not at home,” said the Marchioness, who went nobody knew where ; and Lady Amelia again found herself alone with the Sydneys.

They were again on their usual footing—the discussion about the songs had passed away, and again they were all well-bred, again they were all sweet-tempered. In particular, Mrs Sydney smiled graciously, “ but smoothest waters deepest run ;” for on her the conversation had made a deep impression, and rather an unfavourable one for Lady Amelia.

“ I fear my intended daughter-in-law is a narrow-minded bigot,” said she to herself, “ and little calculated to make a man such as George happy. Poor thing, she is also a very weak girl—much too weak to be managed ; fools are always obstinate. Poor George has been too precipitate in making his proposals,”—and she sighed so deeply, that it sounded very like a groan.

Lady Amelia heard the sigh, and observed the thoughtful expression of her countenance.

“ You are not quite well, I fear,” said she,—“ I have displeased you. Oh, you do not know how such a reflection pains me.”

“ I have merely got a little headache,” said Mrs Sydney ; “ when I put off this heavy bonnet I shall

be quite well ;” and she went out of the room, saying to herself—“ She is an amiable girl too—what pity such wrong-headed notions should have entered her brain ! But what is done cannot be undone—we must now make the best of it.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

“*Les regrets et les craintes se perdirent dans les nuages de l’esperance.*”

THE beautiful Arabella Treadwell had left a town which she had expected to set on fire by the power of her charms ; and the company of Lord Emery was now perhaps the only circumstance which kept alive her deep-rooted desire of admiration. But, to do her justice, a faithless wish had not yet entered her soul ; and Lord Emery had the mortification to perceive, that he must commit himself in a way he was not very fond of, before he could clearly ascertain his chance of shaking her constancy.

Weak minds are sometimes as difficult to work upon as strong ones. Hitherto he had piqued himself upon never having been refused ; but, to ascertain precisely what Miss Treadwell’s reply might be, to what he deemed a most important question, was beyond his reach. Beauideal Lodge, though by no means a retirement, was a retreat from the temptations of routs and balls, as it was too distant, (except upon very particular occasions,) for returning after the midnight hour.

The recollection of Moreland was still strong in Miss Treadwell's mind, and neither her principles nor inclination led her to form a faithless wish. "There was no dangerous candidate on the *tapis*," as Dr Spleen observed; for even to his scrutinizing eye Lord Emery's views had not transpired,—“there is no man worth having, to tempt her to annul her engagement with ten thousand a-year.”

Some people thought she sacrificed a great deal, in consenting to give up what they called the world; their condolences on this misfortune sometimes reached her ears; and her imagination, though not peculiarly vivid, painted the sacrifice she intended making in very exaggerated colours.

Lord Emery thought the stipulations most barbarous and tyrannical.

Dr Spleen, though no religious character, viewed the matter in a very different, and perhaps a juster light.

“I must say,” observed Lady Maria Murphy, “that I think it is a most cruel sacrifice that Moreland demands of one so young and beautiful. Poor thing! I think he is bound to be a good husband, when he requires a woman to live for himself alone. It must be a great trial to the temper, to be shut out from all society with a grave stupid man; unless one has very great resources indeed, within one's self.”

“She will by no means be shut out of all society,”

said Lady Amelia. "She will only be introduced to a different circle. Mr Moreland, I assure you, is much in society ; he is a great friend of Mr W——ce's, who sees a great deal of company."

But Lady Maria persevered in maintaining that, at her age, to be cut off from all amusement was really a prodigious sacrifice.

"Why," said Dr Spleen, "I would really be obliged to any person, who would insist upon my giving up balls and routs. Instead of a pleasure, they are a monstrous bore. To be sure, it is rather a hardship that he should not allow her to go to the theatre. I think he may allow her six tickets into the bargain with the pin-money. As to the other hardships, of being obliged to be married to a handsome young man with ten thousand a-year, and to be condemned to live in a beautiful place, surrounded with all the luxuries of life, my sensibility is not so great as to enter feelingly into your compassionate sensations."

Arabella did not know very well whether to look upon herself as an object of envy or compassion ; but she loved Moreland as much as she was capable of loving any man ; and the chances were in his favour of her remaining constant and true.

She read a few religious books, and Lady Amelia was her favourite friend ; but still all her efforts were to gain the applause of man.

She devoted a great deal of her time, like many other people, to the care of her health. She slept a good deal, and passed a good deal of her time, betwixt sleeping and waking, upon a couch.

She took walks and airings ; read a little, and actually finished an embroidered trimming for one of her dresses. She had the greatest deference for her physicians, and would not have moved hand or foot without their permission on any account.

From the absence of striking faults, more than from the possession of any prominent virtues, she had acquired for herself the character of being a very fine girl ; which, with the additional qualification of a handsome woman, would, in the eyes of many people, compose a pattern of female excellence. But, alas, hers was a character made up of negatives. She did neither good nor evil ; she was like a fair but scentless flower ; a rose without a thorn, but without perfume. The character of “ fine girl,” like that of “ sweet woman,” is often applied, where “ insipid, unfeeling stock,” would be a more suitable appellation.

She had not been allowed by her doctors to go to church, since her illness ; but now declared her intention of going with Lady Amelia to Mr Mansfield’s, which was Moreland’s favourite place of worship. She likewise took a book, as a collector for the Auxiliary Bible Society ; and, upon these foun-

dations, set up as a saint. But we shall leave her to the care of her health, and the adornment of her person, while we return to Lady Amelia, who was undergoing severe struggles of mind, betwixt a sincere affection for George Sydney, and the impossibility of reconciling her opinions and actions to his notions in particular, and those of the Sydney family in general.

“ Shall I be able,” she anxiously asked herself, “ as his wife, to make him happy, consistently with the dictates of conscience ? ”—A deep sigh escaped her.—“ Can I go through the round of gaiety and dissipation that will be expected from his wife, by his relations ? Can I be one soul and one mind with him on all points ? ‘ Ah no,’ replied her heart, ‘ and far less with his parents and sisters.’ Can I spend the Sabbath day in social intercourse with them ? No, no. ‘ He that loveth husband or wife more than me, is not worthy of me.’ But my word is passed ; I cannot now draw back ; I must not do evil that good may come. If he leaves me free to follow the dictates of my conscience, I am his. In another fortnight I have promised to give up my liberty ; to love, honour, and obey. Fain would I hope, that my love, my duty, my affection, my careful attention to please him, may be blessed in turning him to Christ, wholly and entirely.”

The frequent occurrence of little points of differ-

ence, widens breaches, perhaps as effectually as greater causes ; drops of rain in time wear the hardest stones ; and, without ever having had a quarrel, the constant difference of opinion between Lady Amelia and the Sydneys, had created a distance approaching to coolness.

She did not frequent the same place of worship ; she did not admire with enthusiasm their heroes and heroines. She did not dress with the magnificence that a young lady of quality was expected to indulge in. She did not stay out after half-past eleven o'clock on a Saturday night ; nor much later any night ; she called it revelry. What she did not do was considered by them as very whimsical ; but what she did do, was still more seriously to be lamented. She spent much of her time reading the Bible in her own room ; she seemed to grudge herself many of the luxuries that money was calculated to procure, while at the same time she lavished it upon those who had no claims upon her. But, above all, she insisted upon visiting the poor in her own person, which was certainly unsuitable to her rank and station in life. The Sydneys were considered as the most liberal people in the world ; but the peculiarities of one to be so nearly connected with them, they could not fail deeply to deplore.

George Sydney viewed some of the objections in a more favourable light.

“ When she lives with me in the country,” said he, “ we shall do very well. The only point likely to annoy me is, that I fear she will scarcely attend the parish church, if not supplied with an Evangelical clergyman. The dissenters I cannot away with ; but no doubt my influence will be great,”—and he cleared his voice.

’Tis astonishing how much people may have of their own way, in the trifles of human life, when they are on good terms with one another ; but the moment that some of them assert that conscience is the prime mover of their actions, they remain no longer indifferent to the rest, but assume a character of reproach to those who make not the same profession. Had Lady Amelia merely said, that she did not like the theatre, that the lamps annoyed her, or that crowds gave her a headache, there would have been no comment made. But when she dared to assert, that she thought it an amusement unbecoming a Christian, then the offence was given ; then she manifestly appeared to be a fool and a prejudiced person, a weak girl, nay, and a presumptuous one too, for daring to think herself wiser than the Vainalls, the Sydneys, and even the Pelhams.

Politics is also a great cause of dissention ; but differing in religion seems to be considered as the *ne plus ultra* of presumption and impertinence.

CHAPTER XXXII.

“ Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte.”

WHILE Lord Emery was carrying on his designs of supplanting Moreland, a circumstance occurred which was distressing in the extreme to this gentleman, but which, his lordship conceived, gave him a fair handle to depreciate him, even to Miss Treadwell, in a manner he had never before ventured upon. He now affected, and perhaps he really felt for him, a sovereign contempt.—“ Coward ! hypocrite ! all a pretence,” accompanied with looks and gestures suited to the words, were epithets he thought himself fully justified in bestowing upon the truly brave, the truly courageous Moreland.

Miss Treadwell was a woman, and a weak one. “ The world's dread laugh” she was by no means capable of scorning. She could adopt opinions, but could form none of her own. That Lord Emery hated Moreland, would have been nothing to her, because she perceived that hatred seldom lessened respect ; but to hear Moreland talked of with contempt, with scorn, spoke daggers to her soul ; and

she felt all the pangs so nerveless a mind was capable of feeling—the pangs not of wounded love, but of wounded pride.

“ But perhaps Emery is mistaken,” was wisely suggested by the Sydneys; and Miss Treadwell’s mind received the suggestion, and returned to its usual composure.

But that our readers may be no longer in suspense as to the transaction we have alluded to, we shall relate it in Moreland’s own words, from a letter he addressed to Mr George Sydney.

“ DEAR SYDNEY,

“ THOUGH you and I differ materially upon a most important point, yet I hope I have ever appreciated as it deserves the liberality of your sentiments, and the toleration towards mine, you have always expressed in all our conversations.

“ Your good opinion, though not essential to my happiness, will ever form a great addition to it.

“ To your candour I appeal in the statement I am about to make; and I know you too well to doubt that you will use every means to eradicate any unfavourable impressions of me which may have been produced on the minds of my friends, in particular of Miss Treadwell. Yet surely I wrong her by the bare supposition. She cannot love me less for refusing to become a murderer; she cannot respect me less for having acted up to my own principles.

“ But, to be brief.—On Tuesday last, when dining at my uncle’s, with a crowd of honourable men, I was seated opposite to Lord Brandford. The conversation, as usual, ran into keen political discussion ; in the course of which Lord Brandford deliberately asserted, that my friend Wilmot had received a very large sum from the Honourable Mr Fenton, for the part he took in the last election.

“ I felt (unlike the meek Christian on the occasion) my blood boil within me ; and, before I was aware of the import of my words, I said, “ It was false”—“ a base calumny,” and that his lordship was totally misinformed.

“ Disgusted with myself and the company, I retired soon after. But next morning I received a letter from his lordship, importing, that I must either unsay what I had said before witnesses, or give him a meeting in Hyde Park. You are aware that neither of these alternatives could my conscience admit of my adopting. I wrote to him, that I regretted having expressed myself with too much heat ; but that to unsay what I had said, was as impossible for me, as to give him the meeting he proposed. I endeavoured to convince him that my principles were totally opposed to the opinions of the world in that respect. But he adhered inflexibly to his demand ; and declared his determination to brand me as a coward wherever he went.

“ I never underwent so severe a trial.

“ Many of those whom I used to consider as my friends employed every argument to induce me, since I would not fight, to retract my words. It was impossible. A Christian must speak the truth. Oh, if I had not had in this matter a clear conscience, where would now be my solace and support ! There have been no valiant acts in my life to appeal to as proofs of my courage ; and I am now doomed to see myself scorned by those, who, notwithstanding my religion, formerly respected my character. ‘ It is, indeed, a small matter to be judged by man’s judgment ;’ but the flesh is weak, and I fear my spirit is not sufficiently subdued to rejoice in suffering shame for the cross of Christ.

“ Dear Sydney, I will trust to your candour in believing my statement, and to your friendship in defending the motives of my conduct. I have no doubt this transaction will be discussed in the Edinburgh circle, trivial as it may appear in the current of this world’s affairs.

“ My feelings have been much hurt. Why do I not rejoice in being made, in this respect, like unto Him, ‘ who was despised and rejected of men ?’ I have already experienced a great change in the behaviour of those whom I was accustomed to meet in my uncle’s house. I am now a doubtful personage ;

and worldly men cannot conceive the principles upon which I have acted."

This letter had the expected effect upon Sydney ; he defended the principles of Moreland wherever he heard them attacked.

Not so Lord Emery. He declared he could not now consider him as a gentleman ; and thought that his religion served him as a convenient cloak for cowardice.

Miss Treadwell, as usual, felt her mind waver with every new speaker. Lady Amelia was warm in support of Moreland, and so was Sydney.

Meantime Lord Emery was making rapid strides in Miss Treadwell's favour ; his assiduous attentions were habitual, and had almost become necessary to her ; how she would have behaved had she actually seen the interior of his heart, we cannot pretend to say.

Moreland entertained no doubts of her constancy ; he judged her heart by his own.

A few weeks wore off the impression, and almost the remembrance of Moreland's affair with Lord Brandford ; and in a few weeks longer, when either of them was mentioned, the public seemed not to know which had refused the challenge—of so little real importance is the opinion of the world, to which worldly men sacrifice even the world itself.

Notwithstanding the numerous objections on both sides, there seemed every prospect of the marriage between Sydney and Lady Amelia taking place ;—the settlements necessary when great alliances are contracted were now nearly ready for signing. The event seemed inevitable. Mrs Sydney had many conversations with her son, which generally ended with strongly exhorting him to have all matters fully settled, (previous to the marriage,) with regard to the religious liberty he meant to allow his wife.

“ I much fear,” said she, “ Lady Amelia will hardly agree to go to chapel with you ; and surely it would be beneath a man of your spirit to give up the religion of your father and mother, for the caprice of any girl whatever.”

Sydney in many things viewed Lady Amelia's conduct in exactly the same light as his family ; but such was the love he bore to her, that he flattered himself her peculiarities were concealed from all but his partial eye, and that he would escape the mortifying conviction of being known to yield his opinions to a wife. He avoided as much as possible entering into discussions with his mother ; but many of her words sunk into his heart, and embittered his future prospects.

It was a fine evening ; the air breathed balm ; and happy to enjoy a walk apart from the busy streets, Sydney and Lady Amelia strolled out together into

the fields, where the music of the birds, the beauty of the sky, the sweet delicious air, combined to delight the senses, and refresh the soul.

“ How happy shall we be together next summer,” said he, “ in such an evening as this, when walking on the banks of the river at our own retired villa ! They who spend all the year in town are ignorant of the pleasures a bountiful Creator has provided for them.”

“ Yes,” said Lady Amelia, “ I always feel my heart accord with the poet, and I find it sweet ‘ to talk of him in solitary glooms.’ ”

“ The whole of that hymn is beautiful,” replied Sydney : “ And yet the Saviour’s name is never mentioned throughout,” said Lady Amelia. “ But surely Thomson was a Christian,” continued she ; “ and in his pious adoration of the Deity, he must mean to include the ‘ Word, by whom all things were created.’ ”

“ Look,” said Sydney, changing the discourse ; “ look at yon distant spire of a church, how beautifully it glitters in the parting rays of the sun. The church we shall sit in, in the country, makes a beautiful object from the hill.”

“ Is the preacher an evangelical clergyman,” asked Lady Amelia, in a timid voice, as if fearful of the reply.

“ Much the reverse, I fear,” answered Sydney ; “ I wish he may even truly believe in Moses and the

Prophets ; but we have no alternative, unless we should go to the dissenting meeting-house, which, you know, would never do."

"Why not?" said she, with uneasiness.

"Nay, Lady Amelia, how can you ask such a question?"

Lady Amelia cleared her voice, and in the gentlest terms, asserted her right to freedom of conscience in this, as in all other matters.

"It is exactly the same thing to me," continued she, "whether I attend an Episcopalian or a Presbyterian congregation ; but I must hear a preacher who preaches the truth ; and I understand the independent preacher who is near us, is a remarkably pious man, and attracts such crowds that the parish church is quite neglected. He is quite an orator, I understand."

"Orator, or not," said Sydney, "I never will consent to your going there. What an example would it be to our neighbours ! How would it shock my father and mother ! and how justly !"

His colour rose with the heat with which he spoke. Lady Amelia looked timidly at him.

"Did you not promise, when I consented to become your wife—did you not promise to leave me free?"

"And free you shall be, on all points but that one. I did not think that under the name of free-

dom you claimed the privilege of becoming a fanatic."

Lady Amelia wept.

"Oh," said she, "if my conscience urges me only to hear gospel sermons, and they are not to be heard in the parish church, will you wound my conscience and break my heart, by making me wish to oppose you? No, *I* never can be happy, if I cannot make *you* so."

"My love is as generous as yours," said Sydney; "but I cannot think I would promote your happiness by allowing you to be foolish. I own, indeed, the established clergyman is no way to be admired; his morals are very indifferent; and, as has been wittily observed of him, he is like a sign-post, which points the road he never goes; but I make a point, for example's sake, wherever I am, always to attend the parish church; and more particularly, as a married man, I shall think this incumbent upon me. But if you do not like him, I never shall insist upon your going. You may stay at home, and have prayers. But as for your going to a Methodist, or dissenting meeting-house, I never will consent to it. Rather let our projected union, and all the happiness I anticipated from it, fall to the ground."

"You promised me liberty of conscience," said Lady Amelia. "Alas, I fear my liberty would be but

too seldom exerted, when in contradiction to your wishes."

"Dear Lady Amelia," said he, "however painful to me thus to speak, it is my duty not to deceive you ; and I will not promise to sanction your attending a Methodist meeting, even when urged, as you call it, by your conscience."

"Then I fear it is all over," said she, and the tears fell in torrents from her eyes.

She withdrew her hand from his arm, and he walked silently by her side in great agitation. At length, recovering himself, he again drew her arm under his.

"Lady Amelia—my dear Lady Amelia, I cannot express how deeply it pains me, to give you any uneasiness. But my conscience, my duty, my honour, all urge me to speak with candour and truth to you. You shall never find that the promises of a lover, and the actions of a husband, shall differ. On this point I cannot leave you free. Oh, exert your reason ! Save this one point, no woman in the island shall have more of her own will than my wife."

Her tears continued to flow.

"You know me little," said she, "if you think that my own will is my idol. My greatest pleasure would be in obeying you ; but my conscience would never sanction my marrying a man, who does not

promise to leave it free. Alas, alas ! I thought you had liberal sentiments—sentiments such as I entertain towards you. I do not insist on your adopting my religious opinions. Let us be mutually free on this point. Why was this subject breathed between us ? On our former agreement, I could have freely married you.”

“ ’Twas well it was breathed,” said Sydney : “ Oh, what misery would it be to me, to exert the authority of a husband, in hurting the conscience of one united to me by such tender ties !”

“ Then it is all over,” said Lady Amelia ; “ our union on these terms can never take place.”

“ Dearest Lady Amelia, recal these cruel words ! cast not away my happiness and your own for such a mere trifle ! What difference can it make in the eyes of God, to what congregation you belong ?”

“ A wounded conscience who can bear ?” said Lady Amelia, in accents of distress.

Much more was said on both sides, without any approach to agreement ; and when they returned at a late hour from their walk, Sydney retired to his lodgings, and Lady Amelia to her chamber, where, falling upon her knees in an agony of grief, she implored the assistance of Him before whom all hearts are open, to guide hers into the knowledge of her duty.

Next day, with much emotion, Sydney informed the Marchioness and his mother of what had taken

place. To his communication the Marchioness replied with a burst of laughter.

“ I never heard such nonsense in my life,” said she. “ I do not know which of you is the greatest fool. She, for making any such conditions, or you, for not agreeing and promising anything she pleases. Let her have it all her own way before marriage ; and afterwards, do you take yours. I thought you knew enough of the world to be aware, that the promises of lovers are proverbially made to be broken.”

Sydney cast upon the Marchioness a look of indignation.

“ I am no Methodist, madam,” said he ; “ but with me a promise is a sacred thing ; I hope never to be a dupe ; but I am determined never to be a deceiver.”

Mrs Sydney knew her son, and viewed the matter much more seriously than it had occurred to the Marchioness.

“ I feel for you, my dear George,” said she ; “ as I fear that the spirit Lady Amelia has displayed indicates a want of confidence and affection ; a jealous reluctance to yield to you in anything. I would have thought better of her, had she openly avowed that she was tired of her engagement, instead of making such a foolish pretence to be off.”

“ No, mother,” said Sydney, warmly ; “ you wrong her much by such a suspicion. I am persuaded her affection for me is stronger than ever. ’Tis those

narrow-minded doctrines which have perverted her fine understanding, and made all this mischief."

The Marchioness persisted in treating the matter very lightly ; and Sydney was advised to absent himself for a few days, when every endeavour would be used to accommodate differences. He followed the advice with a sorrowful heart ; and in the retirement of the country reasoned with his own mind, and argued with his honour. The result was, a determined conviction that, whatever it cost him, he ought to remain firm.

Lady Amelia, on her part, argued much with her conscience, and prayed to have it enlightened. The result was, that she also must remain firm, or prefer the things of this world to the interests of eternity. In such circumstances, domestic scenes can never be interesting, when related, without considerable abridgments. Suffice it to say, that much blame, and much discussion ensued ; and many negotiations, and several letters passed on both sides. Some interviews took place, and some bitter tears were shed.

"Tell me then," said Sydney to Lady Amelia, "do you still exact a promise? Am I to be forced to resign you, for, pardon me, an imaginary objection? Say that you will be mine, and trust me in all respects, as the guardian of your happiness, the guardian of your peace. Say yes, and let all our

discussions vanish away, never to be renewed ; or,—
cruel alternative !—say no, and condemn me to leave
you for ever.”

Lady Amelia wept, trembled, and hesitated ; made
several unsuccessful efforts to speak ; then faintly,
and almost inarticulately, uttered “ No.”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

“O teach my heart that when it loved too well,
I gave a mortal in Thy place to dwell !”

LADY AMELIA passed a sleepless night. Her heart was torn by contending emotions. “Have I done right, or have I been unnecessarily scrupulous? Oh! perhaps he has reflected; perhaps he will yet relent.—I cannot bear to give him up. Oh, God, help thy poor weak creature!” said this struggling, but sincere Christian. At length, towards the morning, a little sleep refreshed her. But, alas! a certainty of all she dreaded was now conveyed to her in a letter by Dressal. It was from Sydney, announcing deepest regrets, poignant feelings, painful struggles; but the sum of all was, that he was preparing to go abroad, and would see her again no more, till he could behold her with indifference. Her heart sickened when she read the letter; and she burst into a flood of tears, as if now only awakened to the extent of her affection for him. Deep and strong were her feelings; and the agitation of her mind affected her bo-

dily health, and confined her to her bed for a few days.

But her great consolation remained; she prayed for strength, and received it. "My friends thou hast put far from me," said she; "but mine eye poureth forth tears unto God,"

Lady Amelia found herself treated as a forsaken damsel, and yet she was not forsaken. She could not blame Sydney; he had not jilted her; and yet she was spoken to and addressed as one who had been jilted, as one who could sympathize with "tales of love, and maids forsaken."

Lady Amelia exerted herself much, now that all her cherished hopes had ended. "Yes, Mrs Miller," said she, "I bless God that I am now cured indeed. Like David, while there was hope, I mourned and wept. I shall now arise, and wash my face, and bless the Lord, and possess my soul in patience. Oh, God, grant that he may be happy, and that the lot he has chosen may prove a blessing to him, in time and eternity!" Lady Amelia seemed now an altered being; her cheerfulness returned; her faith was confirmed; the right hand had been cut off; and she wondered at herself. Such is the effect of divine grace.

"It is to be hoped," said the Marchioness, "that these raptures will last; but raptures and rhapsodies are rather near akin."

The Marchioness, and Ladies Maria and Jane, told a few particulars of the circumstances under which Lady Amelia's marriage had gone off; and the Marquis had a knot of confidential friends at the Club, to whom he thought it incumbent upon him to relate a few facts. And Mrs Comfit, the housekeeper, had also a few confidential friends, to whom she related the second-table edition of the catastrophe. And Dressal had her confidants; and Tom, and Jack, and all the domestics, had their edition of the story published in confidence among their friends. These friends had friends; and friends had friends again, till friendship ended in the public. "Henny penny told cocky locky," as the nursery song goes. The substance of the story everywhere told was true, but the circumstances were variously related; a perplexing variety of editions of it were abroad.

A number of people who had heard the story were assembled at the house of Lady Maria Murphy, where it was discussed in all its bearings.

"'Tis a sad thing that Lady Amelia has taken it so to heart," said Lady Maria Murphy to the Miss Selfshews.

"How has it affected her?" inquired Miss Selfshew.

"Oh, with the most violent convulsions of grief. She fainted away, and has not been quite herself ever

since ! These highfliers have no more command over themselves than other people."

"It must add to her sufferings," said Mrs Careful, "to reflect how much she has been to blame. No wonder the poor man was off. I think I never heard anything more ridiculous than her stipulations were. She insisted upon his not speaking upon Sunday ; and even in the dead of winter a fire was not to be kindled, because a man in the Old Testament was stoned for gathering sticks upon Sunday. He was also always to fast from Saturday at twelve, till Sunday ditto, P.M. The quantity of prosing sermons he was to hear I have really forgotten, as well as the number of priests who were to be at the wedding. And then the labours he was to undertake ! He was to be president of the Bible Society, and he was to be in the chair of the Naval and Military Bible Society ; and he was to make a speech at all the Societies wherever they assembled, whether in town or country ; and no servant was to be hired without an evangelical character. The question to be asked of a cook was not, Can you make mock turtle, and curry soup ? but—What is your faith founded upon ? In short, the man would have required the patience of Job, to have borne with her folly so long."

"But did you hear," said Miss Pert, "about the wedding-rings ? a lady told me they were to be seen

at some old-fashioned shop in the Old Town, kept by a converted Jew. It is astonishing how absurd people will be, when a craze of any kind gets into their heads !”

“Did you hear about the boxes ?” said Colonel Portly ; “that is the best part of the whole story.”

“Oh, I heard of that,” said Miss Pert ; “that is really good. Do tell it, Colonel, to Lady Maria.”

“Why,” said he, “instead of having their lobby filled with the usual mahogany chairs to be seen in lobbies in general, theirs was to be done up with wooden boxes, marked with gilt letters, for collections from their visitors, for Irish Schools, Gaelic Schools, American Schools, Indian Schools, Schools for the Deaf and Dumb, Schools for the Blind, Schools for the Lame, Schools for the Old, Schools for Sweeps, Schools for Rope-makers, Schools for all kinds of Men, Women, and Children.”

“That is really too absurd,” said Lady Maria Murphy.

“I don’t vouch for the truth of it ; but even believing the half of it, it is ridiculous enough,” said the Colonel.

“But it is all true,” said Miss Pert, eagerly.

“It is what I will not believe, however,” said Lady Maria, “unless you could tell me that you had seen them.”

“I did not see them with my own eyes,” Miss Pert

persisted, "but Grizzy Credulous told me, that she had seen a lady, who had seen another lady, who had seen them. What's his name, the upholsterer, has them all ready in his back-shop. I wish he may be ever paid for them now."

"Oh, he is pretty sure of that," said Lady Maria; "'tisa maxim with that sect to owe no man anything."

"Poor thing," said Mrs Careful, "her folly does not make her the less to be pitied. I hope it will be a warning to all young ladies, who have been in danger of following her footsteps, to stop in time. She was once an amiable, sensible, well-behaved, considerate girl."

"Poor thing, indeed," said Miss Pert, with a mysterious air.

"I believe the family have been in the greatest distress," added Lady Maria, "though the message came back last night that they were all quite well. But the thing won't conceal. Hysterics, convulsions, and delirium, tell upon a naturally nervous constitution. I daresay, in the present state of things, death would be a relief."

"Ah, there are many greater calamities than death," said Mrs Careful. "However, they can take her to the country, and time and retirement may do much. In the meantime, the thing will not conceal; the very servants will reveal the real state of matters, let them send what messages they please."

“Religion and love are both powerful passions,” said Miss Truism ; “when both are united, they may be said to be unconquerable. It is in vain to reason ; let it be a call to us all to take things in moderation, and to feel pity and compassion for the sad fate of the once gay, once innocent, once lovely Lady Amelia Truefeel.”

The feelings of the party were getting vent in sighs, silent interjections, and even a few tears, when their emotions were disturbed by the ringing of the bell ; and, to the horror, surprise, and perhaps disappointment of the company, entered, calm, serene, lovely, and unashamed,—Lady Amelia Truefeel.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LADY AMELIA was not so selfishly engrossed with her own feelings, as to forget to inquire about little Amelia Bell, who was daily experiencing all the hard usage that poor and ungodly parents bestow upon their offspring.

This poor child generally found herself most at home, when wandering up and down the Cowgate. She sometimes cast a wistful look, when she saw Patty Mowbray so neat and clean pass her door upon Sunday to go to church, and afterwards to Mrs Miller's school.

Mrs Miller's house was in one of those squares, formerly inhabited by the nobility of Edinburgh ; but now forsaken for more spacious mansions, and occupied by respectable, though less wealthy inhabitants. Time changes the inhabitants of every place ; and the dwellings of princes become sometimes the habitations of crows. But Mrs Miller found her present abode particularly convenient for one of her philanthropic disposition ; as affording easy access on all sides to the dwellings of the poor. Mrs Miller's

menage upon Sunday's differed somewhat from her arrangements on the ordinary days of the week.

Her dinner was prepared for as many guests as her room could contain ; but the principal part of the cooking took place the day before ; for her domestics were encouraged by their mistress to use every means of keeping the Sabbath-day holy, and had it always in their power to repair to what place of worship they pleased. Among her guests there were often friendless young men, whom she invited, she said, for the purpose of preventing them from seeking their dinners in taverns ; and at her house the Sabbath passed with less tedium, than some luke-warm characters have experienced in their endeavours to keep it holy.

At six o'clock she repaired to her drawing-room with as many of her guests as chose to remain ; and, with the Bible before her, she instructed fifty children in the lower ranks of life. They were all clean and neatly dressed, and anxious for the approbation of their justly beloved and benevolent mistress. Her school was deservedly very popular ; for unlike the manner of too many of the teachers of Sabbath schools, she had the gift of adapting her discourse to the age and capacity of her auditors. She became, indeed, a little child in her selection of words, and in her arrangement of her similies and instructions ; and so must every one who would hope to engage the attention of the young. How often have we lamented in

a fine summer evening, to see crowds of children shut up in a hot airless room, listening with weary ears, and closed understandings, and heavy hearts, to dull prayers, and deep ill-explained doctrines—delivered in monotonous tones by some misjudging, though well-meaning youth, who seizes the opportunity of displaying the oratory with which he hopes, at no very distant period, to charm a crowded audience—instead of devoting his whole thoughts to choose simple words, and simple illustrations, adapted to the young, and, in many instances, weak understandings of the rising generation. How different was the teaching of Him in whom all wisdom dwelt ! He knew that much should remain untaught till we were able to bear it. Yet how forcibly, how strongly, did his illustrations strike the minds of those who heard him !

“ What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone, or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ?

“ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him ?”

The prophets of God deemed no simile too homely to illustrate important truths ; and the very words were put into their mouths by God himself.

Mrs Miller possessed in a more than ordinary degree the talent of simplifying her ideas ; and when

the clock struck eight, the hour of dismissal, instead of the usual joy depicted on the countenances of the children in most places of the kind, the regret was very apparent. As an Italian poet elegantly expresses it, she sweetened the lip of the cup from which the medicine was swallowed. To her pupils her ways were ways of pleasantness.

Mrs Careful had spent a Sunday with Mrs Miller—prompted by curiosity to see how she would go on ; but with her usual caution, she did not take her little daughter. She related all that she saw and heard to Miss Kate Spielittle, and we shall give it in her own words :—“ Well, you see, after our dinner, and before our wine was well over our throats, Mrs Miller rung the bell, and we followed her up to her drawing-room. She sat with a Bible before her ; and her daughter Anna, like a little beadle, stood at the door, telling all the children as they came in where to sit. I think it wrong to expose a child in that manner. What diseases may she not contract ! Mrs Miller has certainly not the ordinary feelings of a mother about her.

“When the room was quite filled, Mrs Miller, without seeming in the least abashed, began to sing a hymn. It was really very pretty when all the children joined ; but what a display ! Then she said a short prayer, and a very vulgar one, I thought. I have no doubt it was her own composition—just what

children might have thought of saying. 'Then she read a chapter clearly and distinctly, I own, and explained it in a way I never heard of before. I have no doubt it was out of her own head. For instance, she told them that all children were wicked ; not even excepting her own daughter Anna, and I even thought she alluded to mine, which I did not think polite. And surely it was not well-judged to intimate, that there was no difference between the rich and the poor.

“ I never heard such doctrines before ; 'tis a pity she is so wild, for she is well-meaning, and not a fool ; but I mean to talk with her, and give her some advice.”

“ I am sure you will do her a great favour,” said Miss Spiclittle.

“ Then she questioned the children very minutely on what they had read, and some of them answered very well indeed ; but I have no doubt it was all prepared beforehand, and that they knew well enough what questions were to be put to them, just as the conjurors have people prepared to perform their tricks upon. Little Anna distributed tickets to the scholars who had answered well. I daresay she spoke to every child who was there. The whole concluded with the Lord's Prayer, I suppose with some addition of Mrs Miller's own. I must say she repeated it very beauti-

fully, almost as well as Mr A. of St W. The whole concluded with another beautiful hymn."

Miss Spielittle, of course, joined in every sentiment uttered by Mrs Careful.

Of how many mixed passions is the unconverted mind composed !

Mrs Careful, while she affected to despise, actually envied the talents and qualities of Mrs Miller ; and felt, that if she were wrong in some things, she was right in so many that her very failings made her somebody ; while even Mrs Careful's supposed virtues, upon which she piqued herself, marked her as nobody.

Like Dr Pelham, she did not hate Christians violently, so long as they could be called weak or stupid ; but when they happened to be gifted with talents, then her asperity, like his, knew little restraint

But what signify the opinions of either Mrs Miller, or Mrs Careful, or Dr Pelham ?

Mrs Miller trusted not in herself, but in the guidance of Him, who had promised to be her light and her conductor in the way of righteousness ; and her actions were blessed with the happiest fruits.

While Mrs Careful, afraid of all enthusiasm, trusted to the dark light of her own understanding, and her opinions produced nothing but error.

CHAPTER XXXV.

“ I had no house wherein to hyde my head,
The open strete my lodging was perforce ;
Ful oft I went all hungry to my bed—
My flesh consumed, I looked like a corse ;
Yet in that plyght, who had on me remorse ?

“ OH, mother !” said little Amelia to Sarah Bell one Sunday afternoon, “ may I run after Patty Mowbray, and go with her to the Sunday school ?”

“ Atweel no,” replied Sarah, “ I’ve been wantin’ ye this while. What taks ye out o’ the way ? Gae wa’ up the close wi’ that short-gown to Lucky Auld-Trash’s, and see what she’ll gie ye upon it. Then gang for twopence worth o’ snuff ; and dinna stay, d’ye hear, or I’ll gie a cuff o’ the side o’ the head when ye come back.”

Amelia began to whimper.

“ Haud your tongue this minute, or I’ll gie ye something to greet for !”

Amelia set off.

“ Where are ye gaen wi’ that short-gown under your arm ?” said a woman to her as she went up the close.

“ I’m gaen to Lucky Auld-Trash’s to sell it for my mother.”

“ Lord help the wean ! Ye’re ill pit up wi’ a mother that wad bid ye break the Lord’s day. Tell me whar ye live, lassie ?”

“ Just down a bit in yon pend,” said Amelia.

“ O ay, ye’re Sarah Bell’s dochter ! waes me, puir thing !”

Amelia proceeded on her way to Lucky Auld-Trash the pawn-broker’s. The one half of the door stood open, though the windows of the shop were shut, and the clothes usually hung at the outside taken in.

The form of keeping the Sabbath-day is still observed in Edinburgh, though the spirit of the godless in all ranks is the same.

“ Weel, what are ye wantin’ the night ?” said the female pawn-broker to Amelia.

“ My mother bid me see what ye wad gie her on this.”

The woman examined it.

“ ’Deed it’s no muckle worth,” said she, tossing it aside carelessly ; “ but, as your mother’s a good customer, I’ll say twa shillins upon it. Stop, or I gie ye the ticket.”

Of course, the reader is aware that the pawn-broker retains the goods, unless redeemed by this ticket, which bears interest according to the value of the

goods impledged. Many articles that had belonged to Mrs Bell were converted into money by this means; and the tickets received were often made use of in the begging trade, to shew the extremity she had been reduced to, and corroborate her assurances that it was to redeem a shift, a blanket, or petticoat, that she asked a small supply.

“ Ah !” said she, “ many a good article I have in pawn, which I was obliged to part with to keep from starvin’.”

Amelia took the money, and straightway went to the snuff-shop, where the door, like Lucky Auld-Trash’s, was half-open, and Tom Trustnone stood behind the counter. He kept good snuff, but insisted upon ready money. Amelia got the snuff, and returned home.

“ Weel, where’s the change ?” said Sarah.

Amelia paid it down.

“ Did ye meet onybody ye could a begged from ?” said Sarah.

“ Just ae lady,” answered Amelia ; “ but she bid me gang to the Sunday-school.”

“ Ye’re a doited thing,” replied her mother ; “ couldna ye hae drappit ane o’ the shillins and grat till somebody geed ye anither ? but I’se say nae mair the night—ye may gang and play yoursell, but be in afore I lock the door.”

Amelia met Patty Mowbray returning from Mrs

Miller's, and again her strong desires to accompany her revived. Some of the neighbours interceded with Sarah in her behalf; but high words ensued, the conversation became spirited on both sides, and ended with Sarah ordering them to quit her mansion. But at last Mrs Miller's perseverance attained the wished-for point, by bribing Sarah with the offer of clothing her from head to foot.

“ O mother, let me go,” said Amelia.

The mother reflected, that if she promised to let her go, she might get the clothes, and that, afterwards, she might let her go or not as she pleased. Amelia's heart bounded with joy, when she heard her mother say—“ Ye may take her; she'll be weel out o' the way.”

No belle on her first presentation at court could feel more elated than Amelia at the thoughts of going to Mrs Miller's. The Sunday, she thought, would never arrive; but come it did, and she set off with Patty to Mrs Miller's. 'T' to her young ears the music of the singing was like the music of Heaven, when contrasted with her mother's vulgar airs. Mrs Miller's house appeared a palace to her, after her mother's dusty cellar; and the voice and countenance of Mrs Miller, while instructing the scholars, contrasted with her mother's scolding, appeared as the words of an angel; and she listened with all the enthusiasm of a young mind, first awakened to thought,

first quickened to feel, and, for the first time, gladdened with the tidings of a Saviour's love. "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," said Mrs Miller.

The impression never was worn off, and on her return home, she lay down and wept at her mother's back, with mixed emotions, when she found herself again immersed in darkness. Though she neither could read nor write, she became, by the blessing of God, so attentive on the Lord's-day, that few were better instructed in the knowledge of their duty, and her young lips soon began to pray for the conversion of her parent; and her heart to be interested in, and to love that parent—hitherto the object of her terror and dislike. Blessed to Amelia Bell was the hour when God directed her feet to Mrs Miller's mansion, and put into the heart of her mother to allow her to attend the Sabbath Evening School.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

“Live in innocence, God is nigh.”

Inscription on the door of Linnæus's Study.

MORELAND, though a Christian, had, in common with other men, a propensity to gild the future, even in this life, in brighter colours than the present displayed; and he counted the days till his return to Edinburgh, when he hoped to commence a new life of comfort and happiness. But though the hopes of Christians, in as far as they are mingled with the things of this world, prove generally unsatisfactory and delusive, yet their disappointments have not the same sting as the worldling's; for even though they lose all that earth can give, their best treasure remains untouched. And the heart that dwells where the treasure is laid up soon surmounts the influence of disappointment in minor concerns. So true is it that “Godliness hath the promise of the life which now is, as well as of that which is to come.”

The affair with Lord Brandford had now ceased to give him any annoyance, and indeed was very much forgotten; and where it was remembered, his

true motives for declining the duel were, though not approved of, yet generally ascribed to him. The world after a little time generally forms a fair estimate of character. Moreland was looked upon as a very particular kind of man; but none doubted his being a man of honour.

None doubted the bravery of Lord Brandford; yet his honour did not stand upon so high a pinnacle as that of Moreland.

Considering it to be his duty, he devoted a good deal of time to his uncle; but, excepting with him, as he avoided all gay society, he had still ample opportunity for active good works. A Christian lives not to himself; and the good deeds of Moreland, though not here enumerated, and never thought of by himself, are recorded in that Book which shall be opened on the great day.

In one of his rambles through the streets of London, he was accosted in the language of supplication by a beautiful little girl, who pointed to a woman who had sat down at a door, unable to move from want. Moreland was struck with the Scotch accent of the girl.

“Where do you come from?” said he.

“From Edinberry,” was the reply.

“And why have you come so far from home?” inquired Moreland.

“ I came with my mother ; that is her sitting yonder on the stone.”

Moreland approached the woman ; she looked indeed worn out and fatigued. He put some questions to her, and gave her a little temporary relief, and telling her to call for him in the afternoon, he pursued his way.

At the hour appointed she arrived ; and Moreland pursued his inquiries more leisurely.

“ What did you come to London for ?” he again inquired.

“ I came about my husband, who went away and left me,” said the woman ; “ and I canna hear word of him ; and a stranger in a strange land, what’s to become o’ the like o’ me ?”

Moreland questioned her more minutely as to her residence in Edinburgh—what was her name—and if there were any person of respectability to whom she was known.

To all which questions she replied in a manner the reader can easily divine ; for it was no other than Sarah Bell, who, being weary of the visits of Mrs Miller, determined upon this summer excursion, and accordingly set off with little Amelia in a London smack.

Her story was completely successful with Moreland. The name of the Vainalls, and other particulars, bore such marks of authenticity, that he sup-

ported Sarah and her daughter liberally, while they continued in London ; and when all hopes of finding the husband were over, or, in other words, when Sarah was tired of London, he gave them a handsome sum for their passage home, and promised to inquire for them in Edinburgh, where he intended soon to repair, to claim the promised hand of Miss Treadwell.

Sarah Mackay, (for she took always the name of Mackay when travelling,) with little Amelia, made out their voyage in a few days, and arrived safely in Little Wark's Close. This trip was unknown to Lady Amelia, who was in the country ; and Mrs Miller was so accustomed to the rambles of Sarah Bell and her associates, that she had ceased to inquire into the causes of their various migrations ; and at all events had made up her mind, for the sake of the child, to wink at all Sarah's enormities, lies, and deceits.

Moreland having arranged his affairs in London, and taken leave of his uncle, till he should appear again in his new character of a married man, set off for Scotland. But here a new trial awaited him ; for he soon perceived that Miss Treadwell's character had improved more in his imagination than in reality ; and that in the most important of all points she had remained at a stand, far short of perfection.

He also soon discerned that Lord Emery was his

rival, and that Miss Treadwell viewed his lordship with almost as much complacency as himself.

He had remained but a few months in Edinburgh, when the film that had been upon his eyes was completely removed, and Miss Treadwell's character appeared to him as it really was.

When his eyes were opened, he felt almost as much perplexed about the expediency of fulfilling his engagement, as he had formerly done about contracting it. He felt that, were it consistent with his honour, the renouncing of it would give him little trouble. Recollecting, however, that we must not do evil that good may come, his scruples subsided, and he determined to look upon her as his wife, and shut his eyes upon the thousand foibles that every day unfolded more and more to his view.

But that watchful Providence in which he had never ceased to trust, knew and designed what was better for him ; for the wavering, inconstant, Miss Treadwell, in a blessed hour for Moreland, and an unhappy one for herself, yielded to the solicitations of the thoughtless Lord Emery, and set off with him to Gretna Green.

The Marquis and Marchioness, and all the Sydneys, were astonished and provoked. The Marchioness felt as if she had been outwitted ; she who piqued herself upon being up to all intrigues, had not seen what was going on under her eyes.

There was nothing now to be done but to make the best of it. Miss Treadwell's fortune would go a certain way in satisfying the demands of Lord Emery's most urgent creditors ; though he might have done much better, he certainly might have done worse ; and the Marquis satisfied himself, that if he had not got a wise daughter-in-law, he had got a handsome one, which latter quality he thought the most desirable of the two in a female. But Dr Spleen was not to be reasoned into thinking that his friend Lord Emery had made a good marriage ; he persisted in saying he had let himself go a bargain after all.

But after all that was done and said, it was agreed, that the fugitives were to be received with decency and decorum ; and, accordingly, letters to that effect were despatched, whenever their place of retreat was known.

The privacy which new-married couples are expected to preserve for a certain time after their marriage, is often very tiresome—like the sequestration that custom prescribes to people after the death of relatives, where no real grief is felt. Lord Emery and his lady had already experienced that they were not all the world to each other, and gladly returned to Edinburgh, very shortly after their flight from it. Here they commenced an idle dissipated life, which they reckoned an indispensable duty for newly married persons in the station of ladies and gentlemen.

They were heartily tired of each other, and were privately looking forward to the Marquis's death, as the period when their true felicity would commence. But lest he himself should die before that blessed period, Lord Emery was contriving to contract debt upon his future prospects, that he might not altogether have lived in vain. This he thought absolutely unavoidable ; and in the midst of riches, he groaned under poverty all his life, from the foolish necessity of having jewels for his lady, baubles for his house, horses for his grooms, and a continual change of place for himself.

By these events Moreland was delivered from his present perplexities.

“ Surely,” said he, as he again bid adieu to Edinburgh ; “ surely the finger of God is in all these events. Shall I then ever doubt of his guidance and direction ; of his power, and of his will, to watch over us, notwithstanding all the wanderings of our minds, and the eccentricity of our ways ? Can I indeed be the same man I was but a year ago ? Blessed be that Being who withheld my desires from me for good ! Surely he ‘ turneth the hearts of men as the rivers of water.’ ”

CHAPTER XXXVII

SUMMER was now far advanced, and the Marquis and Marchioness repaired, with Lady Amelia, to Roepark, their beautiful seat in the north.

Lady Amelia's anxieties, hopes, and fears, with regard to Sydney, were beginning to be quite subdued. If not gay, she was cheerful ;—

“ And on that cheek, and on that brow,
So soft, so calm, so eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
And tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below, a heart
Whose love is innocent.”

There is something in the genial air of a fine summer's day, refreshing to the mind ; and Lady Amelia rejoiced to find herself once more inhaling this sweet gift of nature, in the scenes of her childhood, and seated on her favourite rustic seat. “ How much has passed through my mind,” said she, “ since last I sat here.” A pang came over her heart, and a tear stood in her eye. “ But, oh, what cause have I for gratitude to Him who has done so much for my soul !” She hastily wiped away her tears, and walked towards

her favourite glen—a glen, whose beauties, whose seclusion, spoke peace to all whose minds were at ease, and open to the “still voice,” the soft language of nature. Here the birds built their nests; here the rivulet meandered peaceably; here all the world was shut out, except the inward world of the heart.

“Were it permitted to Christians,” thought she, “to choose earthly felicity; to live for themselves; to court ease of body and ease of mind—surely here they should seek it; for surely in such a glen as this it dwells.” A little experience and reflection, however, soon convinced Lady Amelia that vice and wickedness were found in romantic glens, as well as in populous towns; that the most romantic outward circumstances cannot change hearts which are corrupted to their very core; and, *vice versa*, that a fine mind, an elegant mind, may spring up like a rose in a desert, and may even be found in the Cowgate or West-Port of Edinburgh.

They were rather in a gay neighbourhood; and the Marquis and Marchioness having now no other unmarried daughters, insisted on Lady Amelia’s accompanying them upon their visits to Grouse Lodge, Salmondale, Old Ewe House, and the other residences of their surrounding friends and acquaintances.

Wearied and worn out was Lady Amelia with the worldly conversation, the dull unvaried round to

which she found herself so frequently condemned. "Surely I differ much from these people," said she to herself; "yet how am I sure whether that difference proceeds from religion, or merely from a difference of taste? I know that, even as a worldling, I would be totally different from them. But would I not be a worldling too? Am I yet in heart and mind one of the children of this world? No; I feel that my hope and my trust are not anchored here."

On returning from one of these parties of pleasure, they found letters lying for them from their respective correspondents. One would have imagined that Lady Amelia's letters were at all events from a different country, if not from a different world, from those of the Marchioness;—the manner of stating the same events was so different,—the statement of facts so reversed. But specimens and extracts from the letters will serve better to illustrate the different styles.

"My dear Lady Amelia," began Mrs Miller, "He that keepeth Israel never slumbers. Blessed be his name for having gone before you, as the pillar and the cloud; and that, under his guidance, you have been preserved from all perils, by sea and land, and been conducted in safety to Roepark. Oh, my dear young friend, may you know more and more what it is to have your Saviour interested for you, and be more and more enabled to lay hold on the

promises of the Gospel, and be illumined by the light which emanates from the throne of God, and be nourished by the streams which flow from the fountains of living waters.

“ I rejoice to tell you, that all a mother’s fondest hopes are likely to be realized in my little Anna. She already evinces much love to the Saviour ; and the fair blossoms of virtue are beginning to spring from the sacred seed sown in her renewed heart.

“ I went to see your little namesake, and was pleased with her artless answers ; her mind seems to begin to open, notwithstanding her disadvantages.

“ I have been much with my valuable friend Mrs Faithful. Her tedious illness terminated happily in a blessed eternity this morning about six o’clock.

“ Nature had a severe struggle about the turn of the night ; she called, ‘ Lord Jesus, help me, or I perish ! ’ but afterwards the Lord dealt mercifully with her. I asked her, if she was sensible that the hand of death was upon her ;—she said, Yes, and that she rejoiced in the prospect ; for that to die is great gain to the Christian. Her sister and I joined in fervent prayer at her bed-side. I do not think the Enemy of souls was permitted to assail her. She was so far strengthened as to sing, ‘ The hour of my departure’s come ; ’ and she fell into a quiet sleep, from which she never awoke. Her sisters are much worn out with their attendance upon her, but are enabled

to rejoice in the full assurance of her now sainted rest.

“ I was the other day at Miss Fenton’s marriage, which perhaps you may have heard of. It has given much surprise to many of her worldly acquaintance, who think that she has thrown herself away. But I am of a very different opinion. Mr Beckford is a real Christian, and an excellent man ; and although their united fortune, in the eyes of the world, is but small, yet, with the blessing of God, I have no doubt they have enough, and that they will do very well.

“ The Reverend Dr Dolt is dead, and great interest is making to bring Mr John Biblewise from the parish of Needaword, in his place.

“ If it be the will of God, there is no doubt it will come to pass, in spite of the machinations of worldly men ; and all who love the Lord Jesus will have reason to rejoice in its accomplishment ; for Mr John Biblewise is a very promising young man, who preaches the Gospel faithfully.” .

In such strains were the letters of Mrs Miller, but totally different were those of the Marchioness’s correspondent, Miss Grace Cardwell.

“ My dear friend,” said she, “ it gives me great pleasure to hear of your good fortune, in getting safe, and without any accident, to Roepark, in spite of bad roads and ferries.

“ I always tremble at the thoughts of that road,

when I recollect how Lord Heedless lost his life, through the drunkenness of a postilion, who drove the horses over Breakneck Crag. It makes me quite nervous to think that he was travelling the very road that you must have passed; but you have so much foresight, no accident can happen in your company.

“ The town is extremely dull; nothing going on at all.

“ I have had a pretty severe bilious attack, having been leading a hard life in the way of gaiety. There is no sending one's apology, after a month's invitation. But I have been obliged to decline Mrs Alltheyear's very pleasant parties. I hope the Doctor will take compassion upon me, and allow me to go and hear Miss Quiver sing; she is quite divine; and I cannot see, if carefully wrapped up, how I can possibly get cold. My complaint, he says, is an oppression upon the *spiritual* nerve, and requires cheerful variety, and change of scene.

“ Miss Quiver is quite my passion at present; but I am happy to tell you, that your young friend Charlotte Dash is also likely to sing well.

“ Poor good Mrs Placewell died last week. It was long expected by her friends; though, luckily, poor woman, she had no idea of the kind herself; nay, so little, that she had cards out for a party next Thursday. Latterly, her death was occasioned by catching cold, in coming from Mrs Overheat's rout.

Dr Fib was uneasy about her from the very first ; but most judiciously assured her, that there was no danger. It is said she will *cut up well* ; but I have heard no particulars of the will. Her son, Jack Placewell, will no longer have to pay her jointure, which he grudged very much ; and will now be enabled to marry Miss Dash, which will console him.

The religious Miss Fenton has taken, or intends to take, unto herself a husband—a ridiculous fanatic, who looks more like an undertaker than a lover—twenty years younger than herself ; and who has not a sixpence. It is said, though I cannot believe it, that she refused Mr Splash, who has, you know, £5000 per annum ; but these good ladies are all mad, and think they may do whatever they please.

You would hear that our late worthy pastor, Dr Dolt's situation is probably to be given to a man no one knows any thing of, called Biblewise. But I hope the moderate party will yet be able to prevent it. These things, you know, depend entirely upon interest. All friends to true moderate religion must wish to see that pulpit filled by a man likely to preach common sense.

Poor Dolt's death was occasioned entirely by eating too much melon ; the coldness, upon an empty stomach, brought on inflammation. His family were not alarmed in time, and did not send for good Dr Fib till it was too late. People surely can-

not be too careful, when they see such fatal examples around them, from neglect and carelessness. His wife was a cousin of Lord *Sinecure's*; so I hope the family will get a pension,—as they have always lived up to their income, and cannot have saved any thing.”—With these and similar reflections, Miss Cardwell concluded her epistle.

How differently the same facts appear to the children of this world, and to the people who view the things of the world through the light of the gospel! Lady Amelia was perhaps in a situation peculiarly favourable for forming an unprejudiced opinion; for her friends were all religious characters, while the visitors of the Marchioness were all of the opposite description. By the latter, every event, public and private, was ascribed to second causes; and one would have thought, from their manner of speaking, that it was absolutely people's own fault if death ever reached them—like the old woman, who, on reading the wonderful cures recorded in the envelopes of the patent medicines, exclaimed,

“ ’Tis downright obstinate in folks to die,
When here's for every ill a remedy!”

Christians often differ from one another in points of lesser moment; but in points of grand and leading importance, they have but one mode of acting and one train of thought. Mercy, in its various modifi-

cations, is a universal, a distinguishing feature in Christian character. The poor, all around Roe Park, were acquainted with Lady Amelia; for she had been in their cottages; she had sat beside the aged and infirm; she had sent many of their children to school; and there was scarcely a hut or a hovel in the neighbourhood, where some one of the inhabitants had not had reason to bless her.

The woods were tinged with their autumnal tints—the sky was clear—its colours were transparent; no misty vapours indicated summer heat; the days were shortened, and the sun declined at an early hour, and before the inhabitants of Roe Park had begun to dress for dinner. The moon had arisen to light Lady Amelia homewards, in returning one evening through the beautifully wooded walks of Roe Park, from some of her benevolent excursions. Her heart was filled with that heavenly peace that passeth all understanding. Her naturally poetic feelings experienced all the finest sensations that poetical conception has ever expressed.

“ That soothing shade, that grateful gloom
Can, more than day’s enlivening bloom,
Still every fond and vain desire,
And calmer, purer thoughts inspire;
From earth the pensive spirit free,
And lead the soften’d heart to Thee.”

This evening she had been a little later than usual. As she drew near the house she heard horses’

feet, and the voice of her father talking to Squire Farewell of Fatlove Grove.—She retired a little till they passed. Their reflections upon the beauties of the evening, seemed to be of a very different nature from hers, as far as she could gather from the short but characteristic dialogue, she was under the necessity of listening to.

“ Very good moon, indeed,” said the Marquis ; “ it promises well for our shooting to-morrow.”

“ I fear we have forgotten the dinner hour,” said Farewell ; “ the venison will be over-roasted.”

“ I fear so too,” replied the Marquis ; “ our cook is so exact to his hours ; though it is the best failing a cook can have. However, I give positive orders that he is never to heat the pasty till we are absolutely at table. Besides, I am too much of a philosopher to let an accident of this kind prey much upon my mind. Where a good table is the order of the day, when one dish fails another supplies the void. With broiled salmon, and cold grouse pie, I can always contrive to dine. But should the worst happen, and the venison really be over-roasted, why, Farewell, you must just content yourself with an additional bottle of claret.”

“ I assure you,” said Farewell, “ I don’t fear starvation in your house.”

They alighted from their horses, and gave them to the groom.

“ Really a fine moon indeed,” said the Marquis as he entered the hall ; “ and I feel very well appetised for dinner, cold or hot. How do you feel, Farewell ? ”

“ Not amiss either,” said Farewell. “ Tom, get the boot-jack.”

Lady Amelia entered by another door.—“ Oh, what a lovely moon,” said she, as she gained the brilliant hall, now completely lighted up, and repaired to her room to dress (as is the custom with all persons of distinction) for the ducks and the geese.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

WHILE Lady Amelia was labouring to do good in the country, Mrs Miller was pursuing her usual course in town. She had persuaded Sarah Bell to put her boys into the poor house ; but nothing could induce her to part with Amelia ; for already she had found her a very successful mendicant. The elegance of her form, and the grace of her infant manners, never failed to draw forth a penny from the unthinking passenger. She seemed to inherit the genius of her mother, and promised fair to invent new tricks of her own.

Old Sarah, though she inculcated, both by precept and example, her telling lies, and cheating every human being, yet insisted on the strictest veracity and honour towards herself ; and the injunction of an unsparing use of the rod, was perhaps the only precept of the Bible which she strictly observed. Poor little Amelia was whipped by her mother when unsuccessful, and caressed and indulged when more than usually fortunate. Mrs Miller used every effort with Sarah, but in vain, to induce her to send

the child to school. Much money she had collected upon this pretence, and much more she still hoped to obtain; but she could no longer deceive Mrs Miller, and at length replied to her offers—

“ Mem, ye are ower gude. I wad be sorry to pit ye tae that expense. Besides, I’m a very gude reader mysell, and I gie her a lesson. I couldna want her sae lang as to let her gang to the schule. Wha have I, binna that poor wean, to gang a message, noo that my twa laddies are awa, and I’m turn’d auld and frail? Wha’s to bring me a stoup o’ water? Waes me, folk little ken what they are speakin o’.”

Mrs Miller knew that if she attempted to reprove her, her bad temper would probably wreak itself on the comparatively innocent child. She therefore, without any comments upon her conduct, bid her good bye; and patting little Amelia upon the head, she told her to come to her whenever her mother could spare her, to go to school.

“ What a fuss they make about learnin’ noo-a-days !” said Sarah to little Amelia. “ Pit that auld shawl round your neck and cum awa’ wi’ me; we’ll gang to the ither end o’ the toun the day.”

So saying, they set off on one of their more distant rambles, some miles from the city; meaning to return to their habitation at the close of the day.

After walking some miles, they approached the mansion of Sir George Self-love, who was one of those characters of which every square, and every street, and every country, can produce its average proportion. He was addicted to no particular species of sin; sober, unless when tempted to exceed at a jovial meeting; temperate, having rather delicate health; and honest, because above the temptation of stealing. He was called a good husband because he loved a handsome agreeable woman, who was his wife; a fond parent, for he also loved his children; but, “to teach the young idea how to shoot,” to teach them to love their God, never once entered his brain. He was accounted a good master, though he cared not a straw about either the souls or the bodies of his servants; but he gave high wages, and never scolded them except when much out of humour. But what Sir George Self-love most piqued himself upon was, being a sober rational religious character; for he went to church every Sunday, unless when business, or a cold, or a headache came in the way; and he also united charity to his other virtues, for he gave an annual guinea to most of the charitable institutions, including the Royal Infirmary, which he found exceedingly useful for sick dependants. Moreover, he was never heard to swear, except when a beggar or a dog invaded his

premises. “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, yet lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” were questions which Sir George Self-love would have deemed very impertinent, if put to him; for he took it for granted, that his soul, and his wife’s soul, and the souls of all his children, were perfectly secure, as they had all been baptized, and could all say their catechism, and went regularly to church. Nay, they could repeat several psalms; and either he or Lady Self-love read a sermon or a chapter of the Bible to their family every Sunday morning, when they had no company. So far all was well in the eyes of the world; though not even the world had ever been heard to quote Sir George Self-love as a generous, liberal-minded man, or a self-denying, or a kind-hearted man; for no one had ever heard the widow or the orphan implore a blessing upon his head. He had never been eyes to the blind or feet to the lame; and no imagination had ever pictured to itself Sir George Self-love denying himself aught that his heart desired, for the sake of administering to the necessities of his poorer brethren. Yet all the world had seen or heard of Sir George Self-love’s elegant house, splendid equipages, sumptuous dinners, and choice wines. The same spirit pervaded his whole family.

“ Sir George subscribes to all the charitable institutions,” replied, invariably, Lady Self-love, to all applications of the poor.

“ Papa is good to the poor, for he subscribes to all the charities,” said the little Masters and Misses Self-love.

Thus, Sir George, for the sake of a few guineas a-year, contrived to satisfy, or rather to sear, his own conscience. But, oh ! the deadly blight, which falls upon the young heart, thus early taught the withering lessons of cold indifference, and sordid selfishness !

It was a beautiful afternoon, when a poor old man who had wandered from the city, approached the magnificent mansion of Sir George Self-love, who was standing with his family at an open window, admiring the effect of a beautiful sun-set.

“ I feel my devotion much more excited,” said he, “ by such an evening, than by any sermon I ever heard preached. Is it not so with you, my dear ?”

“ Certainly,” answered Lady Self-love ; “ there is no comparison ;” as her eyes followed a barouche, which passed over the hill. “ I think I should enjoy it much more if seated in that barouche. Our coach and chariot are both so ill hung—I declare I would rather walk, than be stuffed up in either. How I envy that provoking woman, Mrs Gadabout, such an equipage !”

“ I see no reason,” said Sir George, “ why we should not have a barouche also—we ~~can~~ afford to pay for it—and every man and woman has a right to whatever they have money to pay for. Our money is our own, and I am accountable to no one for it.”

“ Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward. Remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things,”—were texts Sir George Self-love seldom thought of, and never as at all applicable to himself. For who could call him a rich man, when he had a large family—and wished to go into Parliament—and would like to buy that small estate which joined with his own. He had not enough of money for all these things; and who that has not enough can be said to be rich?

Sarah Bell and Amelia were reconnoitring the premises, when the old man tottered up to the house.

“ Will it please ye,” said he, in the shrill feeble voice of age,—“ Will it please ye to bestow something on a puir auld man, that can neither work nor want?”

“ Get away,” cried Sir George—all his fine devotional feelings giving way to a burst of impatience; “ get away this instant, or I shall send for the police for you. It is quite insufferable, that after paying a guinea a-year to get rid of such vagabonds as you, we must be still infested with you.”

The old man was deaf, and heard only a part ; but though his eyes too were dim, he perceived that the attitude and physiognomy indicated no heart of pity. But he stood his ground ; “ for where there’s a woman and bairns, there’s aye some kindliness,” thought he.—“ Oh, my leddy, if it was but an auld dud to pit next my skin ; I have nothing but this auld coat, and oh ! it’s rough on my bones.”

“ I make a rule never to give clothes to common beggars,” said Lady Self-love, with an air of hopeless self-approbation.

“ Oh, my bonny lambs !” said he, looking to the children,—“ God bless your bonny faces, and may ye ne’er ken what it is to want !”

But the children, true to the injunctions of their father, answered conformably to the example that had been set them.

“ You should go to work,” said Miss Self-love.

“ You might go and work,” cried a second.

“ If you had not spent all your money when you had it, you would not now have been a beggar,” said a third.

“ If you do not go away I will send my dog after you,” said little, thoughtless, spoilt Master Self-love.

“ Get away, you dirty creature,” cried one who could scarcely speak, but whose infant lips were already taught to revile the poor.

The old man in spite of his deafness made out enough to assure him, that he had nothing to expect ; and fearful and trembling he retreated as fast as his feeble legs could carry him. He had been accustomed to rebuke, and had learnt, “ when reviled, to revile not again. There is another and a better world,” was a thought which had often consoled him during his pilgrimage through this.

Sarah Bell and Amelia now approached. The already irritated Sir George was now out of all patience.

“ Leave my grounds this instant, you lazy thief, or you shall repent it.”

Sarah’s wrath was also raised ; and she began to retort in her own style of invective, which roused Sir George’s indignation to its utmost height ; and, ringing the bell, he ordered the servant to drive her from the door.

“ The insolence of the lower orders is intolerable,” said Sir George ; “ there is a great deal too much done for the poor ; the more they get the worse they grow.”

Sarah withdrew, muttering imprecations, and with all the worst feelings of her nature stirred up by this reception.

They wandered on till they arrived at the mansion of Colonel Goodwill. He and his family were also admiring the glorious orb of day.

“ Que le soleil couchant brille d'une douce lumiere,” said the Colonel to his lady.

“ C'est ainsi qu'au terme d'une carriere penible, l'ame epuisee va se rajeunir dans la source pure de l'immortalité,” replied his lady.

Colonel Goodwill was a man of larger fortune than Sir George Self-love ; but as he was also a man of larger heart, more liberal mind, and, above all, more Christian spirit, he did not make so great an appearance in the world as the before-mentioned gentleman.

He was, perhaps, as free from open vice as it is in the nature of fallen man to be—he was at all times temperate from principle ; and in all his dealings never lost sight of the divine precept, “ as ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.” He was affectionate to his wife and children ; but he loved them with the discriminating tenderness of one, who loved from Christian principle rather than from animal instinct. In all the various relations of life, Colonel Goodwill was the same consistent character. To have heard Sir George Self-love and Colonel Goodwill talk upon the most common occurrence of life, one would have supposed their religion differed as widely as the Christian from the Mahometan.

The same barouche which had excited the envy of Lady Self-love, passed Colonel Goodwill's gate, as he and his family were returning from their evening

walk. "Poor Mrs Gadabout, I am glad she has at last got a carriage to suit her in her delicate health. It must be pleasant to drive about in it in the open air. But here are a pair entering, happier perhaps than any of us with all our vehicles."—It was Sarah Bell and Amelia.

"Oh, what a sweet pretty little girl!" said all the little Goodwills; "and she has no bonnet,—and she will be burnt with the sun."

"Oh, mamma, may I give her my old straw one?" said little Janet, who seemed to be about the same age as Amelia.

"Yes, my dear, you may do so," said her mother, who never checked kindness in whatever shape it appeared; and little Janet ran off for the bonnet in question.

"I don't like that woman's looks," said Colonel Goodwill.

"Nor I either," said his lady; "but I do not like to express much suspicion before the children, at their early age. Alas! sad experience will soon teach them, that he whose example was our pattern, he who had compassion upon the souls of men, was not strict to mark iniquity. Far less let us be so, who can only minister to their temporal wants."

After a few words conversation with Sarah Bell, Mrs Goodwill found her suspicions strengthened. She therefore merely ordered them a little bread and

milk, and gave her twopence. Sarah made her usual demands for an old shift, a bit of flannel, a little jelly, a little wine, for a child she had left at home with a fever; to all which Mrs Goodwill replied, that she never gave those articles unless when she had an opportunity of inquiring into the facts. "But here, my good woman," said she, "is an excellent little tract which you may read at your leisure; and I hope you will be enabled to profit by it."

Sarah made it a rule to refuse nothing, though there was scarcely anything she had a greater abhorrence to than tracts. "God bless ye, my leddy!" said Sarah, as she departed, with her usual whine.

She sent her daughter on before to an ale-house to order some whisky for her, to be ready when she came up; but the ale-house was crowded with people. The old man, who had been repulsed from the gate of the Self-loves, had reached it with difficulty, and had just expired in a fit. Sarah came up, and found an entrance for herself and child. "I declare it's the auld body we met on the road," said she; "I wonder whase aught him?"

"Oh, mother," said Amelia, terrified at the sight of death, "had ye let me gie him the water, when I saw he was wearied, on the road-side, he wadna a dee'd."

"Ye're an upsetten brat, indeed," said Sarah, in

wrath, “to think that ye could save ony body’s life. A beggar yersell ! ye to pretend to help beggars !— unco times, indeed, when a brat like you apes her betters. Come awa, ye hae naething to do wi’ him.”

So saying, this hardened unfeeling woman proceeded on her way to Edinburgh, and reached Little Wark’s Close; while the poor unknown aged Lazarus was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

“Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook—but delayed to strike!”

LADY AMELIA’S good humour and forgetfulness of self recommended her to all. And old and young, religious, and merely moral characters, equally desired her company. Yet, gradually her mind had lost all relish for the conversation and occupations of worldlings, and she felt more self-denial requisite in mingling with, than in separating from them.

The family were at present in Edinburgh; and she made her escape one morning after breakfast, meaning to go and sit with Mrs Miller. On her return, she found herself in the middle of a crowd which seemed rapidly increasing; and, in order to escape it, she turned westward, meaning to find her way by the Lothian Road to the New Town; but, before she was aware, she found herself nearly in the middle of a lesser crowd. Amidst the confusion of tongues, and the groans of distress, all were talking, but none seemed doing. “What is the matter?” said

she, to the first person whose attention she could arrest.

“It’s a woman fa’an,” said a man, “and a cart’s gaen o’er her back.”

“Poor creature !” exclaimed Lady Amelia. “And can no one assist her ?” and she put her hand into her pocket for the grand stimulus to all active exertions. “Can no one assist her ?” again repeated she.

“Tweel no, mem, we canna get her lifted.”

Lady Amelia’s first feeling said, “Let me fly from this mob ;” but she remembered the parable of the good Samaritan.—“I dare not turn aside like the Levite.” She drew her bonnet over her face, and taking advantage of a small opening, she found herself in the centre of the crowd, and near to the object who had drawn it together. It was a large overgrown bulky woman, with a red nose, and a blotched countenance, whom, upon a second survey, she thought she had seen before. The woman cast down her eyes. It was no other than Sarah Bell, who having been more flush of cash than usual, went to see a companion (for friends she had none,) who gave her a dram, but not quite enough. She therefore went into a shop to make up deficiencies, and did the business so completely, that she was unable to stand ; having fallen in crossing the road, a cart, in spite of the efforts of the carter, went over her body, broke some of her ribs, and bruised her leg in a dreadful manner.

Lady Amelia was always collected, and generally had power to put her thoughts in execution. "Can no one carry her to the Infirmary?" said she. The word Infirmary reached Sarah's ears, stupified as she was. All her life she had an abhorrence of this Institution. But her attempts to remonstrate were in vain; her inarticulate pronunciation was not heard; and, in spite of her groans, she was lifted up in the arms of a few stout people, and carried to the nearest house.

"As to the Infirmary, it's past hours noo," said a decent-looking man; "and unless ye're ladyship was to gang and speak a word yersell, I dinna think they'll take her in till to-morrow at twelve o'clock."

Sarah Bell required immediate aid; and though the idea of going to the Infirmary was very repugnant to the feelings of Lady Amelia, yet she felt her conscience urge her to assist the unfortunate wretch. She therefore collected her resolution, and gave orders that Sarah Bell should be taken care of till she returned, or sent for her, while she bent her steps towards the Infirmary. Never was more feminine feeling subdued by higher principle, than when she approached the door, and requested to speak with the manager.

"There's a heap o' doctors in the noo," said the porter; "and we darna disturb them; but if ye'll step in here a few minutes, till they come out, nobody will disturb ye."

Lady Amelia had gone too far now to recede, and gladly retired into the small apartment near the door, to avoid being seen and recognized from the windows by any of the doctors. She felt particularly grateful for this retreat, when she saw Dr Spleen pass, as her courage was not equal to encounter the sneer of his lip, and the daggers of his tongue. The consultations were sooner over than she expected ; for, carriage after carriage, containing doctor after doctor, passed by ; and at last Dr Cutup and Dr Killall drove off. The Secretary now appeared, and Lady Amelia having stated the circumstances, begged that Sarah Bell might be admitted, though after regular hours. The Secretary informed her, that in cases of dangerous accidents, the sufferers were admitted at all times. But being a mere man, he found his activity increase when he learned the name and quality of his visitor.

“ Would your ladyship choose to walk round the Wards ?” said he. “ If you never were here before, it might prove satisfactory ; we flatter ourselves that the Hospital is in a state not to fear inspection.”

As the ice was broken, and Lady Amelia thought it probable that she never would be there again, and being, like the rest of her sex, not entirely without curiosity, she accepted the proposal, but first despatched a chair and proper assistance for the conveyance of Sarah Bell to the Infirmary. She then followed

the housekeeper up several stairs, and through many a long passage, and entered a spacious apartment filled with beds. The cleanliness and good air of the place pleased her much ; but tears came into her eyes, and sorrow filled her heart, when she beheld the languid countenances and the resigned patience of some of the sufferers. This was the Bruise or Fracture Ward, and here it was that Sarah was destined to be placed. Upon the whole, the cheerfulness was wonderful, considering how many had lost their arms and legs since their entrance into this place.

She walked also through the Rheumatism Ward, where the groans were more frequent and the sufferings more acute. She heard a soothing voice at a distance—her Redeemer's name arrested her attention. It was the pious Mr Friendly, who came to pray with and for the sick. Some heard him not, but to others his words were the words of comfort. Lady Amelia, having put a little money into the poor's box, left the Hospital and pursued her way homewards, musing much on what she had seen.

She immediately wrote to Mrs Miller, giving an account of what she had done, and begging her to look after the unfortunate Sarah Bell, as it would not be in her power to return again to the Infirmary, without giving offence to her relations. She gave the note to Tom, who at the same time was going a round delivering cards for a rout. Tom had two hundred

cards to deliver, and Mrs Miller's, which made the two hundred and first, though of a different form from the others, was somehow or other dropped. This circumstance, for reasons best known to himself, Tom thought proper to suppress ; so Sarah Bell and her concerns were for the present committed to oblivion.

The day Sarah Bell met with the accident, she had gone out alone, no one knew whither ; and she had ordered Amelia, as usual, to beg and provide for herself, and to return before the usual hour of locking the door. Home is home, even with all its *disagreements*, and little Amelia found herself happy, after a laborious day of begging, as she entered Little Wark's Close, expecting to find her mother as usual drinking and scolding at the fireside. She opened the door.

"Mother," said she, "here's what I have got."

But there was no reply ; she examined the bed, and being convinced that her mother was not in the house, she began to weep.

"Where is she gone to ?" said she ; and a foreboding of she knew not what came over her mind.

She went into her neighbour's, Lucky Goodwill, who lived but and ben with them, but received no information.

"I'se warrant she's killed," said one.

"Or maybe in prison, or else in Bridewell or the Police, for being fou," said a second.

She walked up and down the Close, asking every one she met for her mother, till near midnight; and then, being completely worn out, Lucky Goodwill put her into her own bed, and patting her, said, “ My dawty, dinna greet.—I ken it’s a sad thing to lose a mother, be she gude or be she ill;—but dinna greet, my dawty, tak a sleep, and I’se gang wi’ ye the morn, and we’ll find her out in prison, or in Bridewell, or where’er she may be, be she dead or be she livin’.”

An evening’s sorrow is a long time in a life which has lasted only a few years. The sorrows of children are not so slight, or of so little consequence, as people imagine. The expectation of happiness is stronger in childhood than in riper years; and its blight more frequently occurs. When hope is fled as far as this world goes, disappointment ceases to rankle; and, though children are easily made happy, they are as easily overwhelmed with grief.

Amelia, having repeated the prayer taught her at the Sunday School, and a few verses of the Orphan’s Prayer, fell asleep, in the midst of her tears, on Lucky Goodwill’s blanket, instead of her mother’s.

CHAPTER XL.

WHEN little Amelia awoke in the morning, her affectionate heart called loudly for her mother, and Lucky Goodwill consulted with Mrs Mowbray what now should be done, as no tidings of Sarah could be obtained at the Police Office. They agreed to take Amelia with them, and to go and ask for the son of Jenny Spoilbairns, a mutual friend, who was in jail for housebreaking. Nothing but maternal affection could have prompted Amelia to get over her horrors of a jail. To a young imagination, bars of iron, and doors of iron, and chains of iron, convey no little horror ; but the greater her horror of the place, the more ardently she desired to deliver her mother from its recesses. The commodiousness, I had almost said elegance, of the New Jail, are too well known to need an elaborate description. The light which reigned in it, so different from the dungeons of her native close, astonished little Amelia, and she might have left the prison with much abatement of the horror with which she regarded it, had not Jenny Spoilbairns, who had too many relations in this quarter,

taken the whole party with her to see a cousin under sentence of death.

Though the sentence of death be in one sense passed by the Judge of all the earth on all of human kind, yet when man is made the instrument of fixing the time and manner—when his days are numbered by a human judge, and when the sentence is carried into effect by the hand of the common executioner, there is in it something inexpressibly solemn and awful.

As they passed through the passages railed and spiked with iron, as the jailor turned the heavy door, where everything and all things seemed formed to guard against the natural wish of escape, Amelia's heart died within her, and she shrunk closer and closer to Lucky Goodwill.

“ I'm scared mysell,” said Lucky.

“ Its a fearful place,” said Mrs Spoilbairns ; “ let us be thankfu' we're no pit in here for breakin' the laws.”

“ It is indeed a fearful place,” said Mr Friendly, “ but it's a fit habitation for Sin, and better than that prison for condemned souls we read of in the Bible, where all impenitent sinners must go.”

Little Amelia rejoiced to get out of this dismal abode ; and being persuaded that her mother was not here, they all left the jail. After equally unsucces-

ful visits to Bridewell and all the Police stations, the poor child returned weeping to Little Wark's Close.

But my readers are, no doubt, anxious to know the fate of Sarah Bell, whose accident was not known till some days after its occurrence, in Little Wark's Close, in consequence of the loss of Lady Amelia's card to Mrs Miller. However, after her friends had given her up as lost, and almost reconciled themselves to the separation, it was discovered that she was in the Royal Infirmary, and in the Fracture Ward. The news was immediately conveyed to Mrs Miller, who, on receiving the intelligence, set off to see what state the poor wretched sinner was in. She found her in a state of delirium, and in a violent fever, in consequence of the inflamed state of her blood ; but there were lucid intervals, and in one of these Mrs Miller approached her bedside. Sarah plainly appeared to recognize her, but her voice was too feeble, and her words too inarticulate, to make any intelligible communication. The doctors told Mrs Miller that, from the state of the pulse and other symptoms, they did not think she would last long. A deep groan from the poor sinner expressed the horror with which she overheard the fatal communication.

“ It is never too late to call for the Saviour,” said Mrs Miller.

The groans of the patient increased.

“ He is mighty to save,” continued Mrs Miller.

The patient shook her head. Mr Friendly came to pray, as was his custom, with all the sick and dying. He asked Mrs Miller to join him. They knelt down beside the sufferer, and prayed for her to the God of all mercy. No motion of the lips gave indication of an attempt to participate in the prayer ; even her hand remained motionless ; and her expiring eye beamed no hope. If there was any expression beyond pain in her countenance, it was that of impatience.

“ Charity hopeth all things.”

They left her, remembering, that

“ While the lamp holds on to burn,
The greatest sinner may return.”

The same evening she expired ; and, like Cardinal Beaufort, she died and made no sign.

Mrs Miller, when informed of the event, repaired to Little Wark’s Close, and communicated the tidings to little Amelia. The child had strong affections ; and the time which had elapsed since she had been separated from her mother, had in some measure effaced the memory of her severity and injustice, and all the disagreeable parts of her character. Poor Amelia wept much, and intreated that she might see her remains ; and after some hesitation, Mrs Miller ordered Lucky Goodwill to take her to see the breathless clay. It made a strong and an abiding impression upon the child, which was never effaced.

Had Mrs Miller not been afraid that little Amelia might have suffered from the bad habits of her parent, she would have taken her home ; her little Anna was already very fond of the poor child. But Mrs Miller was well aware at how early an age abiding impressions, good or bad, may be imprinted ; and those beautiful lines, upon the Sand, she had already committed to memory :—

“ Thou image of the youthful breast,
On whose soft heart may be impress’d
Thoughts foul or fair ; yet not like thee,
Can man’s once tainted mind be free ;
Or foul be fair, with the next tide ;
The mind’s pollution must abide.
Guardians of youth, then oh take care,
The impressions that ye give be fair.”

“ Yes, Anna,” said Mrs Miller, “ nothing but the grace of God can alter our naturally corrupt hearts ; but let us fear, lest we learn from bad example, to call good evil, and evil good.”

“ But Amelia is surely as good as I am, mamma.”

“ Yes,” replied her mother, “ her heart, I have no doubt, is as good as yours ; but she has been a neglected plant, and you have been a cherished one. Yet perhaps in a year or two I may take her to live with us.”

Mrs Miller determined to put Amelia into the poor’s house, where she knew that she would be well taken care of ; and the orphan cherished with delight

the hope, that at the end of a couple of years she would become the servant of little Anna Miller.

Sarah Bell was buried by the town, in the parish where she had lived, just at the same time with Lord John Puff, who died, notwithstanding the care and benevolence of Dr Purdie. His funeral was attended by all the nobility and gentry of Edinburgh and its vicinity, while Sarah, "puir body," as Davie Snuffawec observed with a sigh, "had not even a shoulder-high," but went to the grave in the most economical manner possible.

CHAPTER XLI.

GEORGE SYDNEY, after his separation from Lady Amelia, did not regain the tranquillity he had enjoyed before their acquaintance began. He felt deeply mortified ; his plans overturned, and even his ideas of right and wrong somewhat confused.

But, notwithstanding these uneasy feelings, his conscience, upon the whole, did not upbraid him ; for “ the light which was in him was darkness.” To get the current of his soul again restored to its usual tenor, he had recourse to the universal remedy of worldly men, “ when crazed with care or crossed in love,”—the company of those who were daily in the habit of flying from themselves. He mixed much with the fashionable society of London, and his principles, though greatly superior to the general standard of the world, had become so liberalized, that they were daily getting more and more assimilated to those opinions, which, although “ highly esteemed amongst men,” are “ an abomination in the sight of God.”

But vice, in the society with which he associated, was refined and decorated, as much as its nature could

possibly admit ; and was less shocking to the eye of taste, and to the young and inexperienced, than when exhibited in its proper and natural deformity. For a long time the image of Lady Amelia continually haunted him. How often did he realize that beautiful expression of the Prophet, and “ earnestly remember her still ;”—

“ How oft with anguish view’d each female face,
Where mimic fancy might her likeness trace !”

His affection for her at length gradually abated ; and yet now and then a sigh escaped him, when he compared her with the women of fashion in London, and confessed to his heart how much he had lost.

He now but seldom met with Moreland ;—the circles they frequented were so different and remote from each other ; but he still retained his wonted respect for his friend, notwithstanding the contemptuous manner in which his gay associates talked of him. Lord Brandford, who had formerly challenged Moreland, was now married to, what was reckoned in this polite circle, a charming woman ; their house was a general rendezvous of all the gay, the facetious, the witty, and the fashionable ; and thither Sydney felt himself attracted by the variety and vivacity of the conversation it afforded him.

Oh, could mortals see as they are seen by the in-

visible world ! It might well have been said, that Satan came often amongst them—

“ Gaily carousing to his gay compeers ;
Inly he laugh'd to see them laugh at him.”

Lord Brandford had invited him to a party, where the choicest specimens of the beauty, the rank, and the talent that London could furnish were assembled. There were military heroes, and distinguished men of all professions ; and Sydney was seated near the bottom of the table, beside the witty and accomplished Mrs Claremont, who had acquired for herself the character of much talent, by a fearless and unrestrained liberty of speech, and by the cameleon art of changing and accommodating herself to all variety of companions. She had been entertaining him with a ludicrous description of some of her husband's country relations, who had been, as she expressed it, vegetating in Scotland all their lives.

“ Beware how you talk of Scotland,” said Sydney ;
“ the land of my birth.”

“ I will not permit Scotland to be depreciated either,” said Lord Brandford ; “ for many a happy day I passed there.—Apropos, what is become of that cowardly fellow Moreland ?—become a preacher, no doubt.”

“ My lord,” said Sydney, “ I am tenacious of my country, but still more so of my friends.”

“Whoever may be his friend,” rejoined my lord with a sneer, “still I maintain he is a coward.”

“Then, my lord,” replied Sydney, vehemently, “I maintain he is not; and that, without excepting even your lordship, there is not a braver man in this company.”

Their voices were raised, and the whole company heard his lordship thus publicly contradicted. In louder, and more peremptory terms than ever, his lordship repeated his assertion; and, in as loud and as peremptory a tone, Sydney contradicted him.

“The lie direct,” muttered a young, petulant, new-fledged ensign, who sat near them.

Both were now silent; a calm settled gloom succeeded, and indicated but too surely a coming storm.

The ladies soon withdrew.

A few more pithy words ensued; but they were not words of peace. And Sydney retired to his lodgings to write to Lord Brandford. But ere his letter was despatched, he received a challenge from that nobleman, which he immediately accepted.

The seconds were selected from amongst the officers present at the dinner—men who knew the laws of honour better than the laws of God—accustomed to measure ground, and give the word of death. In this hurried manner it was agreed, that early next morning these rash men should run the risk of murdering or being murdered.

Sydney had a few hours for reflection, and he wrote a letter to his father, to be delivered in case he should fall.

“The laws of honour demand the sacrifice,” said he.—“Nothing but having long held, and professed, Moreland’s principles, could now deliver me. But at such a moment I leave you to judge if I could possibly adopt them. I have not courage to live suspected. Truly he is right—the duellist must set aside the laws of God for the laws of men. I must rush on my fate—I cannot avoid it. I commit my soul to the mercy of God. Comfort Lady Amelia ; I am persuaded she will mourn for me—I have forebodings—they are surely indications of my end. My time is short—fate hurries me on—farewell from your unhappy son !”

The time which still remained he employed in endeavouring to hush the suggestions of conscience, by reflections on his honourable life, and something of a vague reliance on the mercy of God ; and he prayed to that Being he was going to disobey, for strength to perform the infatuated act.

While Sydney was thus employing the precious hours, Lord Brandford endeavoured to rally his spirits by repeated draughts of champagne, and was receiving the plaudits of his thoughtless companions, for the indifference with which he talked of the projected meeting.

He forbore, however, to see Lady Brandford, lest his feelings might betray him ; for, without being capable of strong attachment, he had a kind of skin-deep feeling, which had procured for him the character of a hot temper and a good heart. He therefore continued with his jovial companions till the fatal hour drew nigh ; and then this deluded party set off on the business of death.

It was a beautiful morning when Sydney quitted his lodgings ; the air was still ; all was calm ; London was asleep ; the birds had not yet quitted their nests. Every thing, to his foreboding soul, wore a funereal aspect, and seemed to anticipate the silence of the grave. He crossed Hyde Park without interruption, and found the party assembled. Their levity was in some degree subdued ; and they entered into the business with a gravity, which, even such beings as they were, thought decorous on such an occasion.

The ground was soon measured, and the seconds took their places ; the word was given. Sydney fired and missed ; Lord Brandford returned the fire, and Sydney fell, mortally wounded.

He was, however, quite collected, and able to speak. Lord Brandford's anger was now turned into compassion ; and he hastily and bitterly regretted the act he had deliberately done.

“ Fly,” said the generous Sydney, as he fixed his

dying eyes upon him ; “ you know the laws will condemn you ; fly, let me not have the guilt of your death, as well as my own, upon my head.”

Sydney’s countenance was gradually overcast with the deadly hue, which those accustomed to view the near approach of the King of Terrors seldom mistake. The seconds were quite aware of it, and hurried off Lord Brandford, who had time, on the Continent, to reflect on his conduct. Meantime, the dying Sydney was carried to his lodgings ; where he was soon joined by Moreland, who, hearing of the fatal event, hurried to proffer his services.

“ Alas !” said the dying man, “ what an awful situation is mine ! If you are right, Moreland, what must be my eternal doom ?”

“ There is a long-suffering,—there is a merciful God,” said Moreland ; “ let us pray, dear Sydney. Oh ! yet ere it be too late, turn to Him who died for you, for me, for all.”

“ ’Tis now too late,” said the expiring man.

“ The thief upon the cross found mercy,” said Moreland. “ Oh ! Sydney, turn to your Saviour ; doubt not his power to save !”

Moreland knelt down, and, in a fervent prayer, poured out his soul for the sufferer.

Sydney seemed to join in his supplications. He grasped the hand of his friend with a dying pressure ;

the agonies of death were upon him ; and in a few minutes Sydney was numbered with the dead

Deep was the affliction of Moreland on this dreadful occasion. On him devolved the sad task of communicating the particulars to the Sydneys. And all that the truth of a Christian would permit him to say, he expressed with all the affection of a deeply feeling heart.

And all that the world could convey of consolation was theirs. For the world declared that he could not avoid the duel ;—the world asserted that he was universally lamented, and that had he lived he would have done honour to his country. And the Sydneys, being worldly people, consoled themselves with the consolations which the world afforded—such as they were.

CHAPTER XLII.

“O'erwhelm'd with shame, the Lord of life I see,
Abhor myself, and give my soul to Thee ;
Nor shall my weakness tempt thine anger more ;
Man was not made to question, but adore.”

THOUGH Moreland had taken every precaution to get the melancholy intelligence conveyed to the parties interested in the gentlest manner, yet it so happened, that the first tidings which reached Lady Amelia, came through the public papers. The shock overcame her, and she fainted away. When she recovered, it was to the most bitter reflections. Fatal indeed was the termination of all her hopes and fears with regard to Sydney. How gladly would she have died, not to have been united to him, but to have restored him to life !

The idea that his immortal spirit had perished in the very act of braving and defying its Creator, haunted her continually. Had she been a Catholic, what penances would she have undergone, what pilgrimages would she not have undertaken !—The cold stones would have been her bed ; sackcloth her dress ; her food the shepherd's alms.

“ Oh, what is the death of those we love, when they die in the Lord,” said she. “ Short is the separation ; eternal the re-union. But Sydney—shall I ever see him again ?” The thought preyed much upon her mind. Sydney in a state of perdition ! was an idea she could not bear. It was too horrible even to mention ; and in the privacy of her own character she brooded over the appalling thought till her reason was bewildered, and her heart involved in darkness and confusion. Her amazed spirit, like Job’s, sought to question with the Lord,

“ But found no end, in wandering mazes lost.”

Fatal would have been the delusions to which, in these sad hours, Lady Amelia would have looked for comfort. But the good Shepherd, who never slumbers, but continually watches over the souls of his creatures, saw the state of her mind ; and though great was Lady Amelia’s love to Sydney, yet greater far was the love of Christ towards her. “ Many waters cannot quench his love, neither can the floods drown it.”

Providentially Moreland soon after visited Edinburgh ; and, feeling much interest in her character, he soon discovered the gloomy state of her mind. He, too, had been warmly attached to Sydney, and had needed and found consolation on the same subject himself. He communicated to her the thoughts which

had brought comfort to himself. The riches of divine mercy—the free grace of God—of that long-suffering God who willeth not the death of a sinner. He recalled the examples of the saints in the Bible, who had been tried with ungodly children, and had left all in the hand of God. And he at last succeeded in convincing Lady Amelia, that it was impious to repine at the dispensations of God ; for “ the Judge of all the earth will surely do right.” And perhaps the doubtful state in which Sydney died, contributed more than any consideration to prevent her from brooding over his memory. The very doubt which commands our submission, places us in the attitude most suitable from creatures to their Creator. She shortly became reconciled to this dispensation, and truly felt that in this, as in all things, “ good is the will of the Lord.”

1.

O, child of grief ! why weepest thou ?
Why droops thy sad and mournful brow ?
Why is thy look so like despair ?
What deep sad sorrow lingers there ?

2.

Thou mourn'st, perhaps, for some one gone --
A friend—a wife—a little one ;
Yet mourn not, for thou hast above
A friend in God, and “ God is love.”

3.

Was it remorse that laid thee low ?
Is it for sin thou mournest so ?
Surely thou bear'st a heavy grief ;
Yet, mourner, there is still relief.

4.

There's one on high can pardon give,
Who gave his life that thou mayest live ;
Seek, then, comfort from above—
Thy friend is God, and “ God is love.”

5.

Has cold unkindness wounded thee ?
Does thy loved friend now from thee flee ?
O, turn thy thoughts from earth to heaven !
Where no such cruel wounds are given.

6.

In all the varying scenes of woe,
The lot of fallen man below—
Still lift thy tearful eye above,
And hope in God, for “ God is love.”

7.

Sweet is the thought—time flies apace—
This earth is not our resting-place ;
And sweet the promise of the Lord,
To all who love his name and word.

8.

Then, weeping pilgrim, dry thy tears—
Comfort on every side appears ;
An eye beholds thee from above—
The eye of God, and “ God is love.”

FINIS.

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